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The farm year, toilsome everywhere in China, is punctuated by other activities and festivals which relieve some of the monotony of the long seasons of work. The first of the annual festivals after the New Year is that of Ch'ing-ming, which corresponds in time to the Western Easter. Like Easter, the Ch'ing-ming observance was once a spring fertility festival. At this time, the ties of the living and dead members of the family and clan are celebrated; the family or clan graveyard is swept and food offerings are made to the dead. The performance of these duties is often the occasion for a family picnic at the graveyard. All relatives make special efforts to join in this annual celebration of family solidarity, and the outing is a pleasant relief from winter and indoor work.⁶

4. (continued) landlord-tenant relations in the Southwest which involve the ethnic minorities, see chapter on Ethnic Minorities.

5. J.L. Buck's study of 16,786 farms showed that 39 per cent of these were in debt in the period 1929-32. Cited in Olga Lang, Chinese Family and Society, New Haven, 1946, p. 69.

6. Wolfram Eberhard, Chinese Festivals, New York, 1942, pp. 113-127. Cf. the full description of this festival observance in Yunnan in 1942 by Francis Hsu in Under the Ancestors' Shadow, New York, 1948, pp. 178-82.

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On the fifth day of the fifth lunar month is the Dragon Boat Festival. This is of southern origin and is traced by Eberhard to the human sacrificial rites of the Tai aborigines of south China.⁷ In modern times it has been somewhat less popular in the north than in the south. It is in the south that the dragon boat races were held on rivers and lakes. For most rural families the festival meant somewhat better food than usual and particularly the steamed rice dumplings known as tsung-tzu, symbolic of the rice sacrifices made on this occasion to the shade of Ch'u Yüan -- ancient statesman and poet of the feudal state of Ch'u.

On the fifteenth day of the seventh moon, usually in late August, is the feast of souls, the primitive origin of which has been transmuted by Buddhist belief and symbolism. It is at once a festival for the souls of one's ancestors and a community salute to the dead. Ancestral graves are cleared, sacrifices of food are made, and paper replicas of desirable objects are burned. As a further salute to the dead, lantern-lit boats are floated on some

7. Eberhard, op. cit., pp. 69-96.

527 body of water, to symbolize the community's
796 concern that all the dead may be guided to the
"other shore" -- a Buddhist metaphor for
salvation. Many persons pay visits to nearby
temples and pay for masses for the souls of
the dead, particularly for the souls of the people
in the community who died without descendants
to commemorate their passing. At this festival,
too, special food is prepared for the dead and
for the living, and the farmers and their
families enjoy leisure and conviviality.⁸

The mid-autumn festival is primarily a
moon festival, and the ceremonies in honor
of the moon carried out at moon-rise on this
autumn night are full of the symbols of
fertility and longevity. In modern times it
has been mainly a festival of women, and
the Old Man in the Moon is sacrificed to as the
one who arranges all marriages on earth. The
moon cakes, in the shape of the full moon,
are one of the special delicacies of this season.
This too was perhaps originally a fertility
festival, and in some areas it is a popular time
to make pilgrimages to nearby mountains.⁹

8. Eberhard, op. cit., pp. 129-33.

9. Ibid., pp. 97-112.

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● These are the festivals that have retained the most significance for the Chinese farmer into modern times. Many of them have changed drastically through time, and we shall shortly see that the Chinese Communists are greatly altering the meaning and symbolism of those few which have been allowed to survive.

585 In addition to the annual festivals, the farmer's life of toil may be relieved by ceremonial family events. For a family with resources or the ability to borrow them, a wedding meant a great feast and ample wine; even the poorest families often went heavily into debt to make a marriage ceremony festive. Practical jokes were played on the bridegroom, traditional songs were sung, and the guests, particularly the men, thoroughly enjoyed themselves.¹⁰ The births of male children were often celebrated as were the betrothals and other milestones of family and individual life.

527 In modern times the government of the Republic of China decreed certain national holidays, but these were little observed by the farm villages.

536 In addition to these occasions for

10. For a description of wedding celebrations in Yunnan in the 1940's cf. Hsü, op. cit., pp. 93-98.

- 536 relaxation, special events added interest and variety to the routine of village life. Itinerant dramatic troupes occasionally performed, and until very recently the storyteller frequently appeared on the village streets to spin his
- 622 tales to an impromptu audience. The election of a village headman often involved political maneuvering and a town meeting. Pilgrimages to famous mountains or shrines were often
- 796 undertaken in the slack agricultural season for religious reasons or purely for relaxation.
- 521 Perhaps the most universal ^{cre}reaction was, as in all illiterate communities, gossip and desultory conversation. Francis Hsu describes the recreation pattern in a small Yunnan town:

In the evening, many shop doors may be found open to welcome neighbors and friends who care to come into the brightly lighted interior for a chat, and little clusters of men stand or squat near some street corner, often near a food stand.... The topics discussed at these gatherings range from rumors about national affairs and market prices to local rights and wrongs. 11

11, Hsu, op. cit., p. 25.

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668 down dramatic troupes to play the approved
536 repertoire, now brought to villages by
traveling troupes. Special mobile teams
668 trained to deliver organized "cultural lectures"
208 or to show films dramatizing the "New Order"
have been moving through the countryside.
The old exchange of visits with relatives in
nearby towns now has its Communist counter-
part: interchange of visits between urban and
rural workers' groups to observe one another's
"progress in Communist reconstruction."²⁵

668 The seasonal pilgrimage, in company,
to some famous shrine also has its Communist
counterpart: mass pilgrimages to Mao Tse-
tung's native village, which is being publicized
as a national shrine.²⁶ Despite its frontal
attack on the old familism, the Communist
government last year provided special trains
to take city dwellers back to their native
villages for the holiday; a mass exodus was
reported from Peking.²⁷

• 996 Ch'ing-ming is no longer an approved
668 festival, presumably because of its function

25. Enlightenment Daily, Jan. 23, 1955, p. 2.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid. Also, SCMP, 972, 1954, p. 21.

We have no data on this for the Southwest.

- 776 as a celebration of kinship ties and family
668 continuity. Although we have no data, it is
safe to assume that the elaborate festival
calendar of "West Town," Hunan, described
by Hsü, has been severely reduced by "anti-
superstition" campaigns and other work of
527 the cadres.²⁸ The next approved traditional
668 holiday is the Dragon Boat festival in June.
The boat races have been revived, and the poet
Ch'u Yüan, now a "people's hero, martyred in
protest against a corrupt feudal regime," is
the focus of celebrations.²⁹ The moon festival
in autumn is also celebrated with extra food
allowances and "cultural" activities. The
various anniversaries of the Chinese Communists
and of the world Communist movement probably
do not break into the agricultural working year,
but may be the occasion for special propaganda
arranged by the local cadre. It will be seen
that the pattern of living in the villages has been
drastically altered; what remains of the old
pattern consists of elements too deeply ingrained
to be abruptly condemned without precipitating
a crisis, useful to the Communists in the
interest of morale, or adaptable in the promotion
of their rural program of change and indoctrination

28. Cf. Hsü, op. cit., pp. 22-24.

29. SCMP, 1075, June 23, 1955, p. 25.

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In some places a meeting called *tung-tzu hui* 童子會 is held on the 3rd of the 3rd moon, when women who have obtained sons by taking away a child-idol from Kuan-Yin's shrine return the images to the goddess. When worship is finished these idols are carried off to be given to other childless families, and that night the streets are lively with processions of this kind going to their destinations. 842
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Another present with the same object is a turnip with the leaves on; this is put on the family altar and incense and paper offered to it.

The piece of wood used by a sorcerer to hang his chart on when exorcising a spirit is also regarded as a useful present to a childless family.

At Ch'eng-tu 成都 it used to be the custom on 5th of the 5th moon for youths to pelt with plums women of 'doubtful reputation.' These plums were then got hold of by other people and sent to friends anxious for sons. The origin of the idea is said to be in the story that the mother of Lao Tzu dreamed before the birth of her illustrious son that she had eaten a plum.

At the New Year lighted lamps are hung on trees or high poles; they are believed to attract homeless, wandering spirits, and they are afterwards given to childless families.

At the fast for protection against fire and epidemics small lighted lanterns soaked in oil are set adrift on the river. These are sometimes stolen and presented to some home lacking children, where they are kept on the family altar.

In some temples there is an apartment called the 玉皇樓 *Yü-huang lou*, the Gemmeous Emperor's dwelling. Before his image hangs a lantern. This is sometimes stolen and presented to a childless family. A new lantern is presented to the temple if a child is born. Such lanterns, 玉皇燈 *Yü-huang têng*, are also hung in numbers in an orchard or elsewhere with the object of securing a good crop.

During the first moon lamps are lighted before the shrines of the 土地神 *t'u ti shên* or gods of the soil. After being used they are often presented to childless people in the firm belief that children will then be born.

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Discussions are held 講評書 *chiang p'ing shu*, generally 521 in a tea shop or open courtyard, when some ancient character's merits and demerits are discussed, with a good deal of sarcasm and dramatic contortion; the speech is often lewd and the characters of many of the speakers are of the lowest; in fact many are libertines, with some wit and humour to cloak their wickedness.

A news vendor who carries a stool and books round with him is called 上馬冊冊 *shang ma ts'ê ts'ê*; he stands on the stool and sells his literature, which has a bearing on current events; his sign is a pair of chopsticks. 203

A news vendor of the yellow press is called 下馬 *hsia ma ts'ê ts'ê*. He travels round and carries a flag of yellow or sometimes white paper on which are written the latest sensations. He visits the towns and markets, and to this kind of individual many false rumours are to be traced. He stands on the ground as compared with the former who stands on a stool.

On the birthday of the goddess of Mercy Kuan-yin or 796 • other festival there are often mixed gatherings in the temples to hear the Buddhist doctrines preached. The crowds are often of the lowest type.

* * *

PURCHASE OF PROPERTY 田地買賣 *t'ien ti mai mai*.

THE middleman to find a purchaser first writes a *t'o yo* 託約 425 as an evidence of willingness to sell the property. In this deed 432 the size of the house or the extent of the land offered for sale, and also the price wanted, must be stated. If the owner is at all an unreliable person he will probably be made to write a *yiin yo* 允約 or a deed of willingness to sell, which he will have to sign in the presence of witnesses, lest he should turn round and blame the middlemen and get them into trouble.

The price should be fixed in the presence of the seller, purchaser and middlemen, 三面定價 *san mien ting chia*, but it is more commonly settled in the tea shop by the middlemen alone. After the price has been agreed upon,

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huo kou (火鉤), a long pole with a hook on it for pulling down houses, and a *ma ta* (麻搭), or hemp mop on a pole, which is dipped in water and dabbled on freshly ignited places. In recent years force pumps have been introduced. The official orders the pulling down of houses to prevent the fire spreading, and he enquires when and how the fire originated. If a resident started it he will be beaten to expel the fire demon, and if it is not his first offence he may be expelled from the neighbourhood. An incendiary if caught will be put to death, as the crime is of equal gravity with murder and grave-robbing. 647 693

For the official duty of praying for rain, etc., see under Fasts. On the 1st and 15th of each month incense is burned, *chiang hsiang* (降香), in the temple of the city-god *ch'eng huang* (城皇), the god of War, the god of Literature, the god of Fire and perhaps elsewhere. The official may go himself or by deputy. A Mohammedan official will only act by deputy. 647 796

In spring and autumn, at fixed times, sacrifices of five pigs, five sheep and an ox are made to the Sage in the Confucian temple.

Sacrifices to the god of Agriculture are offered in March and September. The god is said to be Shên-Nung (神農) (B.C. 2700). He is also called Hou t'u (后土), and Ti shên (地神). These sacrifices are generally made in a field kept for the purpose, but used for farming between times. The offerings are pigs and sheep.

At the feast in the 7th moon and at Ch'ing ming offerings are made at the *li t'au* (厲壇), or altar of the discontented dead. Piles of paper money are burned in a roofless stone structure usually in the public burying ground. Sometimes the magistrate does this public duty by proxy.

The official does not attend on the execution ground, but he must see the prisoners bound and the heads must be brought back to him. He whips the executioner lest evil influences should be brought by him. (See under *Punishments*.) 647 681

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40 cash. The *tsung pao* is nominated by the people and appointed by the magistrate. The *t'uan shou* is elected by the "parish" and the *p'ai shou* by those concerned. Each reports to his superior, the *tsung pao* often having free access to the yamen. The *tsung pao* settles many local troubles and in lawsuits his word goes a long way; but bribery and injustice are very common.

The title deeds of newly purchased property have to be stamped, *yin ch'i* (印契), at the yamen; and the rate has risen to 2 per cent with 1,000 cash for the *ch'i wei* (契尾), a document sent to be kept in the provincial treasurer's yamen. Formerly an official about to leave office used to reduce the stamp fees, because all the money from this source went into his private purse; but latterly the tax-office has controlled this business.

The office of *lao tien* (老典) is sold for a term of five years. The price varies, of, course, in different places but in some places 3,000 taels are paid down with an annual payment of 1,000 taels: this belongs to the magistrate. In many places the gentry pay the incumbent 300 taels per annum, whether they have lawsuits or not, but if a guarantee against lawsuits is required much more is paid. These bureaus are where litigation is hatched and fostered, mismanaged and traded on, and the purchase money is very quickly recovered.

Hereditary pensions are paid to families of men who have done important service to the state, *fa yin hsi* (發蔭襲).

The hereditary barons among the tribesmen, *t'u ssü* (土司), receive taxes from their people and pay tribute to the court.

There are four spring officials, *ch'un kuan* (春官), one for each city gate, whose duties are to superintend the making of the spring ox and driver, *mang shên* (芒神). On the coming in of spring, these men don Ming dynasty clothes and a high hat called *t'ieh sha mao* (鐵紗帽). They enter the magistrate's office, give congratulations, and receive food and wine, with silver medals for the year, then they leave the city,

647 the magistrate following. In a selected field an old farmer
796 and his wife await them. The magistrate ploughs his seven
furrows, the farmer sows some grain, the wife bears a basket
of food for him, and the couple receive a silver medal.

The post of *ch'un kuan* is bought for a fixed sum and may be held for life. It gets an annual payment from the magistrate. (See under *Four Seasons*.)

At the end of the year the official seals are sealed up and are brought into use again at the middle of the first moon. (See under *New Year*.)

647 The literary examinations, *k'ao k'o* (考課), have been
much changed lately and much chaos has resulted; hence a few notes on the old system must suffice.

Chi (季) *k'o* examinations were held in the Academy at the four seasons, the subjects being penmanship and composition.

Monthly examinations, *yüeh* (月) *k'o*, were held to select students for the Academy. The Academy head master had great power and could degrade unworthy scholars after examinations, *shih k'o*.

The local gentry also held examinations in the country *hui* (會) *k'o*. Twice in three years an examination, *k'ao shih* (考試), was held to pick out the students fit to proceed to the prefectural examinations. The magistrate had to be shut in with the students in the examination hall, control the examination of the essays and publication of lists of passes.

No public business is done on the anniversaries of the deaths of former emperors, *shou chi ai* (守忌哀).

[796] On the anniversaries of the accession of former emperors, the magistrate wore court dress, worshipped the *wan sui p'ai*, but did not stop work. The birthdays of emperor, of empress, of empress-dowager and heir-apparent were similarly observed. At an emperor's death the magistrate had to sit in straw, *ts'o ts'ao* (坐草), for a certain period.

At the proper time a tablet is hung in the yamen announcing "No litigation in harvest time," *nung mang t'ing*

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The festival of the city god is the greatest event of the year in most cities, and generally extends over one month, when theatricals are acted in honour of the event; and probably many hundreds of taels squandered in every city. In many of the market towns on the Ch'eng tu plain, city gods' temples are still to be found, and the explanation is that these towns were formerly district cities with resident magistrates; they still keep their festivals on the old dates, which vary in almost every place. When the date approaches the residents and shopkeepers are visited by the heads of a society, and every house is asked to contribute to the expenses of the festival. The streets are decorated with coloured and embroidered cloth called *p'êng ts'ai*. A coolie wheels a barrow through the streets with a fire tub on which are burning the branches of the cedar tree or *pai chih* (柏枝) (these branches are widely used for disinfecting houses after disease). Following the wheelbarrow come the *p'an kuan* and the *t'u ti*; these go round on a tour of inspection to see that the streets are fit for the idol procession on the following day. This is spoken of as *sao chieh*, sweeping the streets.

Cho (捉) *han lin*, to seize the wild spirits. This is done by dressing a beggar as a demon, and placing him at a fixed point in the country. Certain persons dressed as runners of the city god go out and apprehend this person, put a chain round his neck and lead him into the city in triumph. Great crowds of people stand round to see this performance. The belief is that unless this is done trouble will break out at the theatricals during the month.

Ch'êng huang ch'u chia (城隍出駕), the city god goes for a ride. In front of this procession the following may be seen:

Ta chu (燭) *hui*, the big candle society, which provides a huge candle carried in front of the idol.

Ta hsiang (香) *hui*, the big incense society, which provides a large stick of incense to be carried between two men in the procession.

Yin ch'ai (陰差) *hui*, for providing runners, or men dressed as demons, to go before the idol. Those who act

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796 these parts are often people who have made a vow at the shrine. Among them are those who wear chains, or the cangue, or hang lamps on their flesh; or carry incense; some are dressed as the celestials of the eight caves (八洞神仙); others as the deciders of fates in Hades (四值功曹) and still others who *k'o t'ou* at each step as they go.

Luan chia (鑾駕) *hui*, or imperial carriage society. This displays various pewter articles carried high on poles; such as a man's hand, a melon, official seals, hatchet, spear, etc. These are to show forth the glory of the idol.

Tuan hsiang p'an (端香盤), to carry incense urns. The gentry and merchants dressed in their best clothing, wearing their official hats and high boots, walk in front of the idol, some carrying incense urns, others gold fishes or silver and other precious metals. The proper order in the procession is as follows: incense, flowers, lanterns, water, fruits, tea-leaves, cakes, precious stones, silver and pearls. These are all brought out as the people's offering to the city god.

The Lung têng hui, a dragon lantern society; Shih têng hui, the lion lantern society; Lung hu hui, the dragon tiger society; Chin hua hui, the gold flower society; Shih kung hui, the nourishment society, and many others join in the great throng, and thousands of people with sticks of incense in their hands follow in the idol procession. The celestials, personified by men, who come out with the city god, are as follows:

Lü Tung-pin (呂洞賓), a scholar of the T'ang dynasty. He is worshipped by the sick, and carries a sword for defence. The eight celestials are said to represent male and female, old and young, rich and honourable, poor and destitute.

Han Chung-li (漢鍾離). This celestial carries a fan with which he fans the souls of the departed in Hades and restores them to life.

Lan Ts'ai-ho (藍采和), said to be a woman, who carries a basket of flowers and assists florists.

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T'ieh Kuai-li (鐵拐李), believed to have been a beggar who died and rose again from the dead; he carries a crutch and a melon and is said to assist physicians. 796 776

Ts'ao Kuo-chu (曹國舅), said to have been a rich man; he wears official garments and hat, in his hands he carries castanets, and he is the patron of mummers and actors.

Chang Ko-lao (張果老), an old scholar who carries a bamboo pencil-case and ink pot and helps scholars to obtain a good style in writing.

Han Hsiang-tzu (韓相子), a youth who is said to have been the apprentice of Lū Tung-pin; he carries a flute and is the patron of musicians.

Ho Hsien-ku (何仙姑), a woman who stands on the floating petal of the lotus flower with a fly whip in her hand, and helps in house management.

Têng kan hui (燈竿會), lantern pole festival. The lanterns are of several kinds, such as *san kuan têng*, three lamps hung out at New Year time representing the Taoist trinity. 776

Wu ku têng, five lanterns lighted in a temporary building to represent the five kinds of grain and the desire for a good harvest.

Yen wo têng, wild goose lantern, a number of lanterns strung on a rope and hoisted high in the air to represent a flock of wild geese on the wing. In some places a pole is erected with cross poles every few feet on which lanterns are hung. These geese are believed to have the power of determining the seasons.

T'ien têng, a sky lantern. This is a single lantern erected in a temple and on river sides, kept lighted all the year round and called *wan nien têng*, ten-thousand-year lantern.

Han lin têng, the orphan spirits' lantern. This is a lantern lighted in a building prepared for the purpose, especially to lighten the benighted spirits.

Yü huang hui (玉皇會), the birthday of the Pearly Emperor, the 9th of the first moon; the Buddhist devotees worship him and offer gifts on the shrine.

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Wên Ch'ang hui, the festival of the god of literature, who is now one of the patron idols of the secret society, owing to the Confucius Society being gradually amalgamated with the larger Society. This is held on the 2nd of the 2nd moon.

Kuan yin hui, the birthday of the Goddess of Mercy, held on the 19th of the 2nd moon.

Hua shên hui, the birthday of the god of flowers, who is said to be Wu Tsê-t'ien (武則天) of the T'ang dynasty. The date is the 2nd of the 2nd moon.

Lao chün hui, the birthday of the founder of the Taoist sect, who is said to have been born at the Ch'ing yang kung near Ch'engt'u, where a great annual fair is held in honour of his birthday on the 15th of the 2nd moon. This is perhaps the most famous fair in the province, large numbers of people go to worship at the shrine of the Sage and also at that of his mother, which is next door, and at the shrine of the celestial Chang san fêng of the Ming dynasty. *Li lao chün* is made more famous by being reputed to be the ancestor of Li Ping of irrigation fame.

San f'o hui (三婆會) the Goddess of Mercy festival. This is *san hsiao* (三霄) or the *Sung tzu Kuan Yin*; this birthday falls on the 3rd of the 3rd moon.

T'ung tzu hui, the baby festival. This is often held on the same day as the last-named feast; the custom of *ch'iang* (搶) *t'ung tzu*, scrambling for small images, is still carried out with great gusto.

Fo tsu hui (佛祖會), the birthday of Buddha, held on the 8th of the 4th moon.

Lii tsu hui, the birthday of one of the celestials, the god of the sorcerer, those who manage the magic pen.

Tung huang hui, the birthday of Yo Fei, who became the god of the eastern peak. This is a Taoist festival and is held on the 28th of the 3rd moon.

Tan tao (單刀) *hui*, the birthday of Kuan ti, ancestor of the Secret Society: being a native of Shansi the people toward the north make much of this festival.

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Lang chung (國中) *hui*, the birthday of Chang Fei. 79 •
This is the day for butchers, soldiers, and archers, and falls
on the 22nd of the 3rd moon.

Ts'ai shên hui, the birthday of the god of wealth, the
patron deity of the silversmiths, cash shops, and business
men in general.

Yüeh wang hui, the birthday of the god of medicine,
worshipped by doctors and medicine shop keepers. This
falls on the 28th of the 4th moon.

Wang yeh hui, the boatmen's god festival. Said to be
Yang Ssü wang (楊泗王), of the Sung dynasty. His title is
Chên Chiang wang (鎮江王); the date is the 6th of the 6th
moon. The festival is kept by boatmen, raftsmen and all
who trade on the waterways.

Ling tsu hui, the festival of the witch, wizard and
sorcerer, on the 16th of the 6th moon.

Yen ti hui, the birthday of the god of fire; in some
cities a great procession parades the streets on this date.

Lu pan (魯班) *hui*, the birthday of Lu pan or the
carpenters' god, said to have been the son of a statesman of
Lu who lived in Ch'ü fou (曲阜) about 500 B.C. He is said
to have been clever at inventions and is now worshipped by
carpenters, masons, hewers, sawyers, and carvers.

Lo (羅) *tsu hui*, the birthday of Lo tsu the barbers' god.
On that day the barbers have one of their few holidays. It
falls on the 13th of the 7th moon.

Ts'ai lun hui, the birthday of the paper-makers' god, a
general holiday for the paper factory employees.

Mêng 'ien hui, the birthday of the pencil-makers' god.
The workers have a holiday on this day.

San huang hui; this is the festival of the fortune tellers
and quack doctors.

Hsuan yüan hui, festival of the tailors' god.

K'ung Tz'ü hui, the birthday of Confucius. In schools the
tablet of Confucius is worshipped. Chair-bearers also wor-
ship the sage because they believe that he invented the sedan
chair.

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Ch'i pao hui, the festival of the miners of gold, silver, brass, iron, pewter, coal and lime. This is a great feast; pigs are killed and crackers fired off in honour of the god of precious things.

Shan wang hui, the birthday of the god of the hills, worshipped by woodmen.

Ch'ai wang hui, the wheelbarrowmen's festival. Ch'ai was an ancient emperor who only ruled a few months. Barrowmen also worship Kuan ti who is said to have been a barrowman in youth.

Lao lang hui, the actors' festival.

Shuang ling hui, the yamen runners' festival. At this time the chicken-footed god and the local deity come out for an airing. This falls on the 4th of the 4th moon, and the yamen runners worship the above two deities who assist them in sifting out difficult cases.

Niu wang hui, the birthday of the ox king. The general holiday for oxen; few if any do any work on this day, the 1st of the 10th moon.

Ma wang hui, the birthday of the king of horses. Yamen runners and horse-fanciers make a good deal of this festival.

Tu K'ang (杜康), the festival of the god of wine, worshipped by the distillers of alcohol; *I Ti* (儀狄), who lived about the time of Hsia Yü wang is said to have been the first famous Chinese brewer, and he was executed lest his art should be propagated among the people.

Ma t'ou niang, the silk-worm god, worshipped by all who rear silk-worms.

Chien tu shên, the god of the professional gamblers. He is set on the table, in worship incense, candles and crackers are used, a chicken is killed and a bow made toward the table and the image.

Wên shên (瘟神), the god of pestilence. It is believed that he saw a demon poison the well, and jumped in and drowned himself to keep the people from drinking the water.

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Hsien nung shên, the farmers' god, said to be Chou Wên wang, the ancestor of Hou chi. Some people still write *Hou chi hsien nung* as a tablet and worship it. 796

T'ai tsū, the actors' god. Said to be T'ang Ming Huang, whose image is kept on a chair on the stage to keep the actors from laughing.

Chin ching (金精), the gold essence or silversmiths' god. The pure gold is believed to be a spirit.

Lu yū (陸羽), the tea growers' god. This was a personage belonging to the Sung dynasty who was able to grow good tea.

Ch'i yu (蚩尤), the salt god festival, said to be Hsüan yuan. Tradition has it that he was the first rebel, and his blood became salt.

Jih yu shên, the rambling god of the day who is believed to have only one foot.

Yeh yu shên, the rambling god of the night, who is believed to have only one hand.

Chiang t'ai kung, the fishermen's god, who is believed to be Chou Wên wang and the originator of idolatrous practices. Though a scholar, he fished till he was eighty years of age with a straight hook and rice as bait.

FIRE AND PESTILENCE FAST (醺會), *Chiao hui*

The feast of All Souls is held yearly from the first to the fourth moons, and is strongly believed in as a protection against fire and pestilence. It is called *Ta ch'ing chiao* (打清醺), *Wên ho* (瘟火) *chiao*, and *P'ing an* (平安) *chiao*.

The fast may last from four to fifteen days. There is no killing of pigs, oxen and chickens or any live stock, *chin t'u* (禁屠), and so rigid is the fast sometimes, that it is hardly possible to buy an egg.

Strings are stretched across the streets and yellow paper flags, with fringed edges and holes punched through them are displayed, *yang fan* (揚幡), to call the spirits to enter the hall of the fast.

A list of contributors to the expenses of the feast is made out, with the names of the priests invited, and the particular

• 796 deities to be invoked. The altar is sometimes set up in a temple, but sometimes in a booth for the purpose. The idolatries practised and the rites performed are much the same as in sorcery. In each family the kitchen god is specially worshipped.

A boat is made of a bamboo frame covered with paper, for carrying away the demons of fire and plague. At the end of the feast it is carried out and destroyed. The following is the tablet pasted on the door of the temple where the fast bureau is situated; at the close it is carried away (火擗分遞四值功曹傳送土地) to the piazza where the offerings are burned, also to the spirits of the four points of the compass, and to the precinct god.

The tablet *Wên ho p'ai*, to the god of fire and pestilence is set up at the door of each house where they have contributed to the funds of the fast. It is presented by the managers of the fast and is carried out along with the other paraphernalia at the close: 當年太歲瘟火二部至德尊神各家本宅廚竈神君. To the spirit of pestilence and fire of the current year. To the kitchen god of each family.

Ch'ao fan (朝幡). To visit the streamers. Each 10 or 20 families besides having streamers stretched across the street, have a small flag staff set up in their vicinity, some 15 to 20 feet high; during the day a long yellow streamer is suspended from it, and at night a light is displayed there. The officiating Taoist sorcerer visits each of these poles morning and night throughout the fast. On the first visit he burns an official dispatch to the god of fire and pestilence, and afterwards burns paper each morning and evening and kneels and worships the fire spirit of the vicinity. The tablet written and pasted on the pole is as follows: 幡桿使者樹幟大神. To the angel of the pole, the great spirit who unfurls the flag.

It is said that this fast was instituted by a priest at Niang tzü ling named Ch'ên Chung-yen soon after the Chinese subjugated the Chin Ch'uan (金川) district; at that time, whole armies of Chinese and aboriginal troops were

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slaughtered, making the disembodied and orphan spirits very many; and this mode of appeasing them was adopted. 796 •

Each family who pays a contribution toward the expenses of the fast, also hands in at the same time the names and birthdays of the heads of the family to the officiating priest, who finds out from the Yü chang shêng shên (羽章生神), whether the year will be propitious for them or not, in order that precautions may be taken.

The names of contributors are sent by dispatch to the Pearly Emperor. This dispatch is burned in front of the fast bureau. Similarly, he receives a list of the classics chanted and the incantations done during the fast.

Two tablets are written and given to each family, one for the kitchen god, another for the fire and pestilence god. Candles and incense are also distributed to each family. The kitchen god in each household is worshipped by burning *ch'ien ma* cash horse (this is one difference from the ancestral worship where *chih ch'ien*, paper money is used); then the fire and pestilence boat begins to parade the streets.

Before the boat reaches the house a tub of water is placed in front of the door, and a lighted lamp is placed inside the tub; then someone blows out the lamp, which implies that the fire is extinguished. When the epidemic boat reaches each house a man with a broom goes and sweeps a little in front of each door, collects what remains of the tablet candles, incense, paper money, etc. and throws them into the boat; this is called *sao t'ang* (掃蕩). The boat, after fulfilling its purpose of collecting all the fire and demon influences of the district is then taken to the river side and set fire to, and pushed out on to the water which carries it quickly away.

To *san chên chai fu* (撒鎮宅符) is to give a charm of protection to each family which has part in the fast. A charm is written on yellow paper, of varying size. These character charms are all made up by sorcerers for the special purpose; they are the seal of the *san ch'ing*, of the Pearly Emperor, of *Tou k'ou* (斗口), or the *Ling kuan* charm.

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Small paper lamps which have been soaked in oil are then lit and sent off on the river in the dark to light the orphan spirits of the drowned.

Ch'ien sung shêng chia (饒送聖駕) is to disperse the spirits to their abode with an offering.

Food and warning are given to the demons *shih shih fang chieh* (施食放戒). A row of candles is set up by the wayside (this is called *ch'a lu cho* 插路燭) to lighten the demons to the spot. The candles are made of lengths of bamboo four or five feet high, and are sometimes eighty or more in number; they are wound round with paper soaked in oil and pitch. After they are lighted some rice gruel is placed at the foot of each candle; so that the spirits may have both light and food, along with the exhortation to repent and forsake their evil works. T'ang pa tzü are scattered sweetmeats, which are scrambled for and eaten by everybody; the belief being that they who eat them will be relieved from bad dreams and the danger of becoming crazy.

The idols of the temple where the fast has been held have to be pacified, lest they may have been offended or jealous; and this ends the yearly fast for preventing fire and pestilence.

A fast to the god of fire, *Ta* (打) *ho chiao*, is proclaimed when there has been a conflagration in the neighbourhood, or certain omens point to one being imminent. In the case of a conflagration the family in whose house it started may be fined and beaten by the official and people, kept from receiving any monetary help disbursed or may even be driven from the district. In cases of thieving during the conflagration the goods are rarely taken home for seven days till the danger of fire connected with them is quite removed. So great is the fear of fire that when distributing relief, no one will dare to take the relief unless they have really suffered, lest they themselves should be implicated. Those who are thus burned out of house and home are not allowed to enter any person's house for seven days, lest they should bring the fire demon with them; for this and the following things the fire demon has to be appeased.

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If a chicken goes on the roof, it is very unlucky and a sign that fire is likely to come, owing to the red on the rooster's neck, which is like fire. The chicken when caught is beheaded, and the head thrown over the roof of the house; some will not even eat the chicken for fear of fire. 787 777

To spill oil or alcohol in the house or on the street is believed to be very unlucky and a certain sign that fire will break out. Any coolie spilling oil on the street is fined or his oil confiscated to pay the expense of pacifying the fire demon.

Rooks chattering in the night is said to be a sign of fire. Sometimes the rooks are driven away, but never killed, as they are reckoned to be very lucky birds.

Rats removing their young from a house, a snake twisting round a bamboo to get to the sun, a shower of meteors, or a meteor falling are signs that fire is likely to break out. In order to drive away the fire demon the following black arts are resorted to:—

Shua shui lung, to play the water dragon. The dragon is made of a plaited bamboo framework about one foot in diameter and perhaps 21 feet long. Each family prepares a bucket of water and throws it over the dragon to drown the fire demon. 796 782

Ch'ien sung hao hsing, to take away the fire star. This is supposed to be the planet Mars, which is also said to be the star of evil rumours. When this affair is carried out in detail many of the ceremonies of the former fire and pestilence ritual are gone through.

Ta wen chiao, to pacify the pestilence god. In times of cholera the people became very excited and everything possible is done to appease and deceive the demon. They even go to the length of having the New Year in the middle of summer. The fresh door-gods are put on the doors, new scrolls are written and pasted on the door posts, the idols worshipped and incense burned, with the idea of cheating the demon and making it believe that it is midwinter and thus cool weather.

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782 A dragon made of light bamboo covered with green cloth is carried through the streets and into the homes of the people; each family receives it with incense, candles and paper, while the men who parade it are rewarded with money. Many of the incantations and ritual given under the fire and epidemic fast are practised in this also.

Again an epidemic boat is made, with a man *shao kung* (艚公) at the bows and a woman, *shao p'o*, to steer, while in the centre of the boat sits the demon. The beard of the fire demon is red, while that of the pestilence demon is green. The god of the pestilence is said to have been K'ang t'ien chün, whose tablet is as follows: 當年行瘟天子至德尊神. To the god of pestilence who governs the current year.

A fast of praying to heaven is held, *Lo* (羅) *t'ien* or *Ch'i* (祈) *t'ien ta chiao*, in times of distress or at regular intervals from three to fifteen years in different cities. When the fast is proclaimed it is generally a very rigid one, with much ritual, sorcery and chanting, and may last from seven to fifty days. During the recent rebellion, before the establishment of the republic, this fast was proclaimed in many places to ask for protection from the government soldiers.

Huang ch'ung (蝗蟲) *chiao* is a fast held in the country to keep the locusts and caterpillars from the crops. If this fast is held in a temple the local precinct god is notified by the burning of incense and putting up of fresh scrolls at his shrine. Five-coloured flags are put up at the corners of the field; this is said to be equivalent to invitation to the rooks to come and devour the pests. The old custom of walking round the fields beating a gong or drum is still to be found; it is said that the caterpillars fall to the ground at the sound. Farmers say that one of the chief benefits of a heavy thunderstorm is to make these pests drop off by the thousand.

FASTS FOR RAIN AND FINE WEATHER,

(祈晴禱雨) *Ch'i ch'ing tao yü*

In times of drought or very wet weather the official issues a proclamation forbidding the butcher to kill pigs or oxen, chin tu (禁屠). The idea is that the taking of life is an offence against the gods.

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In times of drought an altar is put up at the Lung Wang miao, the temple of the dragon king. In times of flood it is erected at the Huo shên miao, the temple of the god of fire. At this altar the district magistrate makes obeisance morning and night.

When fasting for fine weather the north gate of the city is closed; when fasting for rain, the south gate; because it is said in the eight diagrams, the North belongs to water and the South to fire.

To shoot the mists, ta wu (打霧). In times of continued wet weather, soldiers are told of to shoot at the mists. The people put great faith in this practice.

In wet weather the official has to worship the sun tablet in some temple, and all the people have to worship a tablet to this luminary at the doors of their dwellings.

In times of drought the Dragon king is worshipped and each home has a tablet put up beseeching his help; also the water dragon is brought out. This is a plaited bamboo frame joined together with sackcloth, which is paraded through the streets by young men; each house prepares a bucket of water and a ladle and as the dragon passes it is drenched with water. Another method is to *hsiao kou*, to laugh at the dog. The custom has its origin in the saying, if you laugh at a dog the weather won't be fine. In times of desperation for lack of rain, a dog is dressed up as a bride, put in a chair and carried through the streets and every one laughs at it, hoping that by doing so rain may come.

Officials go barefooted and pray for rain; this is said to be an example of an official suffering for his people.

In some cases the Ch'êng huang or city god is stood in the sun. I have known of the district magistrate getting angry at the prolongation of the drought and demanding that the city god give him an explanation; he said, "You govern the dead, and I the living; let us both stand in the sun and the one whose head splits first must bear the blame of the drought." The result was that the idol's head was cracked by the sun.

796 Men also go to the dragon pool and carry home a
782 bucketful of water, which is worshipped at the altar. At the
pool a chicken is sacrificed and its head thrown to the dragon.
On the return journey twigs are stuck into the hair of those
who go on this errand.

The *pang* (𩺰) *pang yü* or *wa* (娃) *wa yü*, is a human-headed fish, a kind of mermaid; it is caught and kept in a tank of water till the rain comes. This is a rare fish, but it has come under my notice on two or three occasions, when thousands of people have run mad after the creature.

When the magistrate is not in favour with the people, they may attack the yamen and demand water for fields or rain.

Another method is to throw the egg. A water butt is prepared and filled with water, and decked round with cedar and willow branches. An egg is selected, over which "thunder" incantations are read morning and evening for three days, after which it is thrown up into the air with the belief that the rain will accompany it on its downfall.

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BOOK VI. TIMES AND SEASONS (四季), *ssü ch'i*

THE SEASONS OF THE YEAR (二十四節)

Ying ch'un (迎春). Meeting the spring is the farmer's annual holiday. Great crowds go to the city to see the spring ox and the official procession. On the morning of the day, the various small officials of a district city make their way to the magistrate's office, where they get their pay for that day. Later in the forenoon, the magistrate, dressed as a court official, with 16 men bearing his chair and 16 pulling it, comes out in state. Even the yamen underlings ride horses and wear degreed men's hats on this occasion. They proceed to the east gate and meet spring in the form of an earthen ox and an image spoken of as the *mang shên* (芒神) or ox driver. The spring ox is taken to a field on the east of the city, attached to a plough and taken a few times up and down the field, with the magistrate after it; the magistrate then approaches the real plough and buffalo, which has been prepared and decorated for the purpose; this is called *kung ching* (躬耕), personal ploughing. After worshipping the spring ox and driver, he returns to his office by the south or west gate. That day he gives a feast to all his underlings who have congratulated him on being the priest of spring. This is the only day in many officials' lives when they really can be great. Sometimes he rides in an open chair with

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796 garlands of flowers and branches over and around him. The
805 day costs him some hundreds of strings of cash and is one of the gala days of the year.

The ox is made by special instructions from the official, and great interest is taken in all the details of colour both of the ox and the driver. If the ox is yellow, the people say that the year will be a fruitful one, and a bumper harvest is expected. If it is red, fire and calamity will be rife; if white, mourning will be very plentiful; if green, plague will ravage the country; if black, sickness and disease will be plentiful. The spring will be early or late according as the tail is uplifted or downhanging. If the ox is lying down it is also an indication of a late spring. If the garments of the driver are stripped off and trousers tucked up then an early spring is expected, but if its shoes are on and down at the heels the spring will be late. If the clothing is properly on with girdle and garters complete, then the spring will be an ordinary one.

The ancient custom of making a mud ball in the shape of a drum during the winter and breaking it at the opening of spring *chi tu ku* (擊土鼓) is probably the origin of the spring ox.

Li ch'un or *ta ch'un* is to begin spring. This is the day following the meeting of spring, and the crowd is much smaller. On this day the farmers will not sweep their floors for fear of sweeping away Mother Earth who has to bring forth her fruits, neither will they disturb her by sowing or digging. The spring ox and driver having been taken the day previous to the yamen court, the official, dressed again in the robes of the priest of spring, makes an offering to them, after which he strikes the first blow at the ox which is speedily demolished by the crowd and carried off to the homes and the fields of the people. The calf inside it is taken and carried to some family which has no sons. The driver is burned and the whole cleared out of sight and the ceremony is now over. Among the rustics all this is very important, and some even believe that if there was no spring ox there could hardly be any harvest.

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Yü shui (雨水), spring rain. At this season flowers are transplanted and trees grafted. Aged people, who need to *chieh hsien* (接限) do so with the greatest benefit, they believe, at this season. (See *Sorcery*.) 796 • 805

Ching chih (驚蟄), the time of moving insects. At this season snakes come forth from hibernation and bees emerge from their hives. The silk-worms' eggs are now taken on to the bodies or into the beds of people, to be hatched.

Ch'un fên, spring equinox, a general holiday for farmers, called the master's gathering, 當家會. No one goes into his field or garden on that day lest he should be troubled with birds and insects through the year. On this date the king of birds is worshipped.

Ch'ing ming, clear brightness. At this season, great crowds of people visit the graveyards, *shang fên* (上墳), and put flags on the graves. These flags are said to show the grave is still attended, but in some places their purpose is said to be to call the spirit. Incense and paper are burned, and food prepared at home is carried here and eaten picnic style. Many go to weep at the graves, but many more go for a day's pleasure, to drink wine and play at "Morra," and many become deeply intoxicated. It is believed that the departed ancestors present themselves and partake of the offered food. At the New Year and the 7th moon feast the spirits of the ancestors return to the home, but at this season, the living visit the habitations of the dead. In Kwan Hsien this feast is spoken of as *lao wa* (老鴉) *hui*, or crows' festival.

At this time the city god goes to relieve the orphan spirits *shang ku* (賞孤), by burning the cash paper. On his return journey, the district magistrate goes to meet the idol procession.

Han shih (寒食) *chieh*, the cold food feast. This is an ancient feast held the day preceding *ch'ing ming*. Formerly no one lighted fires in the house on this day, in remembrance of a certain *Chieh Chih t'ui* (介之推) who was a henchman of one of the princes of the Lieh Kuo period. When on one occasion the prince was about to die of starvation, Chieh Chih

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805 t'ui cut off a piece of his own flesh and gave it to the prince to eat, and thus saved his life. When the prince got to the seat of power, he forgot his faithful henchman, whereupon he fled with his mother, having a willow twig stuck in his hat, to a certain Mien Shan 綿山. When the prince eventually recollected his friend and benefactor he sent men to seek him; Though it was reported that he was hidden on a certain mountain, they could not find him. So in desperation they set fire to the brushwood on the mountain to force him out, but he would not yield and was burned to death; and ever since that time some remembrance has been kept of him; though no one refrains from lighting a fire on that day as formerly, still many people wear a twig of the willow tree, either in the hat or hair, in remembrance of him.

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221 *Ku yü*, rice rain. This is the time when the rice seed bed is sown. Rain and sunshine are both needed at this time.

Li hsia, beginning of summer. Summer is believed to come from the south.

Hsiao man, small fullness. That is, the *hsiao ch'un* or spring crop is ready for reaping in order to clear the land for the summer crop.

Mang chung, hurrying to plant the rice crop. This is the busiest season of the year, with reaping and ploughing, harrowing and planting.

Hsia chih (夏至), the midsummer solstice. At this season the male and female principles are unequal and therefore have to be avoided.

The people now begin to count the days till the dog days or 三伏天 commence. If the three *fu* (伏) are complete, there will be 30 days, but they rarely are complete, the autumn coming in before these days have run through their course, but after autumn there are still twenty-four autumn tigers, 秋老虎, following on the *san fu*. In each Chinese moon there are three *k'eng* (庚), that is, one in every ten days; after midsummer three of these *k'eng* are counted and then the dog days begin, and may last from 21 to 29 days.

Hsiao shu, small heat, and *ta shu*, great heat; these two cover the period just spoken of as the dog days.

805 The seventh and eighth nines, the hands still hug the clothes. Nine-nines are eighty-one, the farmer ploughs his land.

Hsiao han and *ta* (大) *han*, small cold and great cold. These two periods cover part of the eighty-one days of cold. This period has also a saying—小寒大寒凍死老蠻, small and great cold freeze the old aboriginal to death.

NEW YEAR (過年), *kuo nien*.

● **796** As soon as the last moon comes people begin to be
805 anxious as to how they are to collect and pay off their debts; much scheming and quarrelling and even suicide is the outcome.

Tao ya (倒牙). The last meat day of the year. Workmen and apprentices are expected to receive pork twice each month; and an apprentice after he has eaten 72 of these pork feasts is supposed to be a full fledged workman. This is the last of these *tao ya* for that year and it falls on the 16th of the last moon.

On the 20th of the last moon the official seals up his official seals, *Fêng yin*. The seal is put on a table and incense and candles burned in its honour; the official then bows down and worships it. Afterwards it is taken and put into its own case; this case is then enclosed in two others which are locked and sealed, after which it is again worshipped and put away for the New Year holidays. During this period no important official business is transacted, except for cases of preserving peace and life.

K'ang (炕) *la jou*; smoking the New Year bacon has to be done after midwinter; if done before, the meat will not keep good. The poor buy a piece of pork and make their bacon; but the rich kill their own pigs. This is an important affair in the country districts; before the pig is brought forth for the slaughter the master of the house puts cash paper on the ground where the pig will be killed; three sticks of incense and two candles are stuck in the ground round about the spot. When the pig is brought forth the master of the house kneels and worships it, saying, "We are going to kill you for use at

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the New Year season, but in the next life may you become a man." After killing the animal the bucket containing the blood is taken and offered to the family gods, the cash paper on which some blood has dropped is placed on the family altar. This is called *hsien hsüeh ch'ien*, offering blood cash. The pig's blood, after being offered to the idol, is taken and made into black puddings.

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After the 20th of the 12th moon the evil influences which have been governing the year are removed, and any and every part of the house may be turned topsy-turvy; so the housewives take advantage of this liberty and have a house cleaning. After the dust is swept down, the windows are papered with fresh paper for the New Year season.

The kitchen god is sent off to make his yearly report to the Pearly Emperor. Before he goes sugar candy and tea are offered to him and some even make a written petition regarding the affairs of the family. This petition, called a *tsao shu*, kitchen god petition, is burned at his shrine. He is supposed to leave on the 23rd and come back on the 24th of the last moon, but in some places it is the last night of the New Year before the returning ceremony is observed; when he does come back there is much idolatry with a great deal of importance attached to the event.

Owing to business being largely suspended for some days, and the general need of money by everybody, great quantities of idolatrous and eatable supplies are laid in during the last week of the year. Among the rich plenty of sweetmeats are prepared in the home by a specially engaged cook.

Gratuities are given to servants and assistants at the close of the year.

About the 24th there is a feast to wind up the year, *t'uan* (團) *nien*, when the whole household is expected to be present. Before eating, the ancestral tablet is worshipped and the food is offered to the ancestors. It is implied that the spirits of the ancestors return to the home at this season; for this reason no outsider is permitted to partake of this meal, but friends and acquaintances are sometimes invited by the less superstitious.

796 Spring scrolls, *ch'un tui-tzu*, are put up on either side of
805 the door and on the lintel. A good business is done during the last few weeks by the scholars, who write scrolls for the small sum of from 12 to 30 cash per set.

Fresh door gods are pasted up by nearly every family.

Five sheets of lucky paper or tin foil, *hua ch'ien* or *hsi ch'ien*, are hung up over the door; these remain till business is about to be begun when they are taken down and burned.

The barbers are busy at this season, but after the 16th of the last moon many of the formalities of barbering are dispensed with and only that which is necessary to make a person clean is done in the barber's shop.

Paper clothing and money for the ancestors are burned on the last day of the old year.

In the hill districts the people go to the graves and invite the spirits of their ancestors to return on this last night of the year, when a fire is lighted for their comfort in the chief room of the house and offerings of food prepared for them; but even when the spirits are not invited their presence in the house is implied by every act.

To fire off crackers, *fang huo pao*, is part of almost every act of the New Year season.

On the last night of the year, the younger generations make obeisance to the elder, while the elders make the juveniles presents of money to pass the New Year season.

The rich also make presents to the poor, the gentry to officials; the officials to gentry, etc. The presents are carried in an open tray with a card accompanying. Official presents generally consist of pears, scented rice, oranges, tea and sea dainties. At this season such men as the keepers of the city gates, the night watchmen, street police, come with a present which is only for show and, in return, they expect their annual gratuities.

A card is taken round late on the last night of the year and pasted on the doors of friends and acquaintances; taking leave of the old year, *ts'ü nien t'ieh ts'ü* (辭年帖子), or *mên chien* (門箋). In the morning some doors are pretty well covered with them.

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Very early on the first morning of the year the head of each household goes outside his dwelling and offers paper and incense, tea and wine, to the New Year. 796
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There is a custom of going out for a walk before dawn, *ch'u hsing* (出行), or *ch'u tien fang* (出天方). If any one is met, no words pass, and what one hears is an indication of what his year will bring of good or bad luck, peace or quarrelling. This custom is also spoken of as *chieh hsi shên*, to welcome the pleased spirit. The almanac tells the direction in which the spirit may be met.

Picture gods of wealth are taken round from door to door and sold for a few cash, the vendor using lucky words and good wishes for the year.

People mutually pay calls, *pai ta nien*, on the 2nd of the moon, and receive and give cakes and sweetmeats.

On the 5th, newly married people go to visit their relatives, *pai hsin nien*. The 5th of the first moon is also known as *p'o wu* (破五), breaking the fifth, after which a good many people begin work and business.

At the New Year season everyone wears his best, and everyone tries to have something new for fear of otherwise becoming a beggar during the year. Flour balls or *t'ang yuan* (湯元) are eaten so that worldly affairs may be good "all round." Dough strips are eaten by almost everyone and are a favourite kind of present, because it "eats long," which may mean long life or abundance of wealth. In the same way stale rice is often eaten at this time, as it is a good omen of plenty in the barns for the coming year. Beggars are often given money on their first asking, as an omen that money will be easy during the year. See under *Superstitious Dread*.

Gambling, *tu po* (賭博), is one of the many curses that come to an idle Chinese population. Up to the 5th, no one pretends to try to stop it. After that date an official proclamation forbids it, but everyone knows this is merely for official self-protection in case of trouble; nearly everyone gambles at this season from the highest officials down to the poorest of the people, and many youths are ruined by it.

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805 The season is an opportunity for visiting, *tsou jên hu* (走人戶), much taken advantage of by the women and girls, who are largely confined to the house at other times of the year; no one goes empty-handed as that would be very unlucky; but presents of cakes, sweets, bacon, etc., are often handed round several times during this visiting season.

After the 5th some shops begin business, but very often only half the shutters are taken down. No credit is given and no past debts will be asked for. The first customer will be allowed to have the goods at his own price, as it would be unlucky to turn away the first comer without doing business.

A lamp is lighted at the door of each house. In some places the residents are fined if they neglect this custom; the idea is that if the streets are lighted no demon will come to do damage.

The Dragon Lantern festival is held on the 15th. A lantern in several lengths is made, with a head after the likeness of a dragon's. Each length is supported by a light pole and carried by a young, lusty fellow. The different lengths are joined together by red calico, and are swung round and round so as to appear somewhat like a worm writhing. The dragon is the king of the scaly tribe and hence is feared by all the demons. First it is carried to a temple and the idols are worshipped; afterwards it is paraded through the streets and carried into any courtyard that will receive it. The streets are lighted with many-coloured lanterns, and the dragon lantern, lighted up, is paraded round the streets with two men carrying a *pao* or precious thing in front. Huge crowds collect, and a rowdy evening is the result with much stealing, hustling and jolting. This is a very ancient custom, and the chief idea is that the dragon drives away pestilence.

The lion lantern, *shih têng*, is made up by two men walking with bent backs; one manages the head and the other the tail. A huge cloth with a lion's head painted on the front and a tail sewn to the other end makes the lion. After having visited the temples, the procession parades the streets with a priest in front leading the lion. The priest carries a brush in his hand. If invited, they enter any house to drive

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away pestilence. On the streets high platforms are made of square tables piled one on top of the other, and on these the lion-actors perform acrobatic feats of jumping, rolling over to the ground, standing on the head, etc. 796
805

The ox lantern is an ox-head painted on a bamboo sieve, with a cloth body and tail. It is used in country towns with the idea that it will bring a full harvest for that year.

A rabbit lantern is pulled along the street by two persons; one, dressed like a Tibetan, leads the rabbit, and another, dressed like a Tibetan woman, drives it. This is connected with the idea that the Tibetan is not only wealthy, but also brings in wealth.

There are also fish, turtle, tortoise, prawn and crab lanterns; the *ao shan* (鰲山) lantern has camphor mixed with the oil and sheds a pretty green light.

There are displays, which are both elaborate and expensive, of *yen ho chia* (烟火架), fireworks. In many of these fireworks much medicine is mixed with the oil; the idea seems to be the driving away of pestilence from the home or community.

The *ch'ing ch'un chiu* (請春酒) is a feast generally given by a landlord to his tenant farmers from the 5th to the 10th of the first moon. Sometimes it is held later and may even be in the second month.

Riddles are written and hung up over the door of the house, and in the light of the lantern festival, people guess the meaning and then, if right, jump up and pull them down; rewards of fruit and sweetmeats are often given to those who make a right guess.

At this time the people eat flour balls with treacle inside; these balls are now called *yüan hsiao* (元宵). There seems to be a kind of concert held in the home, and young men and maidens sing and trip in the form of the figure eight both on the street and in the home. The ballads they sing are called *nung an ko*, farmers' peaceful ballads; but they have now lost that ideal and have degenerated into mere *yin ko* (淫歌) sensual songs.

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805 Opening accounts, *k'ai chang*, is not done till after the *hsi ch'ien* (禧錢) has been burned. When this takes place much idolatry is observed, crackers fired off and all to get what is spoken of as *k'ai chi* (吉) *chang*, a lucky start in business for the New Year.

Official seals are released *k'ai yin* generally on the 19th of the first moon. A similar ceremony is observed as at the sealing up time.

To visit the graves of ancestors before the 15th of the first moon is called *shang nien fên*; this is done by those who for any reason were hindered from doing so during the last moon of the year. Those graves not attended to before the 15th are known as *yeh kuei fên* (野鬼墳). The reason graves are mostly repaired in the last moon is because the influences controlling the year are in abeyance during the last days of the old year.

To steal some person's vegetables, *t'ou ch'ing* (偷青) on the 15th of the first moon, is lucky.

Children return to school, *shang hsüeh*, any time after the 8th of the first moon; they have to pay their respects to the master by bowing and knocking their heads, and giving a small present of money. In the case of a gentleman inviting a private tutor for his home he has to make a written agreement the year before as to what salary he will give and when and in what currency; and what present he will give at the feasts. This is called *hsia p'in* (下聘). A common salary for a master of the old school is anything from 40 to 80 strings of cash with board and lodging, with few holidays except at the 5th and 7th moon feasts. When the time arrives to welcome a new tutor, the gentleman sends a chair and servant to escort him. On his arrival a feast is spread, the tablet to Confucius is worshipped by the head of the house with the three-fold *k'o t'ou*. The scholars must also bend and worship the tablet to the sage of learning and wisdom on beginning their studies.

Then (大人做生意, 娃娃檢狗屎) adults go to business and the children to gather dog manure. That is, every one must get to work.

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MIDSUMMER FEAST (端陽節), *tuan yang chieh*

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This feast is held on the fifth of the fifth moon, this being the time when the sun is believed to be overhead, and the dragon festival is observed.

The story of Ch'ü yüan is well known: he was a statesman of Ch'u, accused to and cast off by his prince, he saw his country ruined, sat down and wrote the poem *Li sao* then went and committed suicide by drowning. The people ought for his body and afterwards started the dragon boat festival on this date to commemorate his merits. The dragon boat is long and narrow with a dragon's head and tail; it is well manned and simply flies over the water. In the centre of the boat is a drum, with a man to beat time to the rowers, a clown rises up and down making fierce grimaces, and armed men stand on the prow of the boat brandishing their weapons to frighten the demons so that they may give up Ch'ü Yüan. This festival has, however, become degraded by the influence of Sui Yang Ti (隋煬帝, A.D. 605), and is chiefly composed of and managed by the inconstant and vagabond set, who amuse themselves by throwing plums at the women of the crowd.

One of the ideals of this feast is to take a bath, *hsi tsao*. People wander round the country to find special herbs and different kinds of grasses, *yu pai ping* (遊百病), which are taken home and boiled and the concoction used for the healing of disease, or they are mashed into a salve for boils called *pai ts'ao kao* (膏). Others bathe in the water in which the herbs and grass have been boiled. Even prescriptions prepared on this day are believed to be more efficacious than those prepared on other days.

A small bag is carried near the breast in which incense, camphor, and other medicines are put to draw away disease; the shapes of these bags are varied, being like frogs, monkeys, tigers, and cats, or like a red pepper-corn.

Frequently the bodies of children are smeared all over with hartall wine, *hsiung huang chiu*, as it is believed it will protect from snake-bites.

- 796 *Hsiung huang suan* (雄黃蒜), garlic dipped in a preparation of hartall, is hung at the door. Mashed garlic and hartall wine is sprinkled on the floor and door posts of the house to keep away snakes and ants; it is said that if a snake touches hartall its body will decompose. A few ounces of pork is dipped in this hartall and then hung up over the door.

This practice of hanging artemisia over the doorway seems to have some foundation in history. It is said that in the T'ang dynasty, a rebel, Huang Ts'ao (黃曹), who ravaged the country, captured a woman fleeing with two children; the woman carried the big child on her back and made the little one walk. The rebel chief asked the reason for this and she explained that the big one belonged to the elder brother of the family and the little one to herself, but the elder brother's child being the more important she carried it on her back. Seeing her piety he gave her a sprig of artemisia and sent her home, telling her to put the sprig over her door, and when the rebels came to the place they would not harm her.

Nearly every one stops work at least half a day, and in the afternoon houses are almost deserted, every one going out to the country to walk off their sickness. All business is suspended and theatricals are held in the country temples.

An old custom was to put millet in a cow's or sheep's horn *chiieh shu* (角黍), and drop it in the river to find Ch'ü Yüan. This custom has now changed into eating *tsung tzu* (粽子), or glutinous rice balls, rolled up in bamboo leaves. They are eaten by almost every family and are freely given as presents on this occasion.

It was a custom in Ch'êng-tu for men to throw plums at women of doubtful character; the plums were afterwards taken home in the hope that male issue might be given. The custom has been stopped for some years in Ch'êng-tu.

This is a time when teachers' salaries are due, and school fees paid. Teachers give scholars fans and scholars give money to the teachers. Presents are freely exchanged in many walks of life from the magistrate to the humblest citizen. People like to dress well at this feast, and policemen and beggars expect their gratuities. It almost seems as if it

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was the children's feast, because they get a great deal of 796 ●
attention at this time.

The image of Chang Tao-ling, the ancestor of the Taoist popes, a fierce-looking idol, is carried out in an open chair with a canopy to keep off the sun or rain.

He is said to be riding a tiger probably because of the *t'ien shih* (天師) belonging to Lung hu'shan in Kiangsi province. When he comes out it is in style of an official, with umbrellas, flags, and boards as evidence of his position, but besides these, there are many persons dressed up as his underlings and assistants. Thus, two children, each on horseback, carry the credentials of the idol, *ch'ih shu* (勅書), and the seals of office.

P'an Kuan, the decider of fate in Hades, rides a horse in front of the idol. He is masked and in his hand he holds the book in which the fates are written. During the procession he is supposed to take note of all he sees and record it in the book.

The *T'u ti*, precinct god, rides behind the decider of fates and is supposed to impersonate the *Shan mên t'u ti*, who is said to control the demons of the city. On this day he comes out on a tour of inspection.

There are four judges of appeal in Hades, *ssü chih kung ts'ao* (四值功曹). One judge holds power for a year, another for a month, and another for a day, and the fourth for one Chinese hour (two hours). These are the messengers of the idol to run at his bidding and are all impersonated on this occasion.

The five thunders, *wu lei*, are represented by five men riding on horses with a frame and drum (for thunder) slung on their backs, with a chisel which represents lightning in one hand and a kind of clapper in the other.

The five poisonous creatures, *wu tu* (五毒), are snakes, toads, spiders, centipedes, and scorpions. These are made of paper and tin-foil and carried through the streets before the idol, alternating with the five thunders.

The chicken-footed god, *chi chüeh shên*, is represented by a man with a hideous mask and a garment covered with

- 796 chickens' feathers. His mission is to call people to repentance. The true characters are said to be 機覺, and the meaning 知機警覺; that is, "know of this opportunity and repent."

Some persons paying their vows hang lamps on their bodies, *kua shên têng*. Thus, a son may have made a vow that if a sick parent got better he would walk in the procession of the idol with a certain number of lamps hung from his skin. This custom is said to be derived from the *jan têng Fo* (燃燈佛), the "light lamp Buddha"; when these men walk the streets a dozen or more persons walk alongside of them with split bamboos which they shake and rattle all the time to keep people from coming near their persons, as if they were sacred.

Others of less note pay vows by having a sword handle glued to the abdomen and the point glued to the backbone, giving the appearance of being stabbed through the body, *k'ai ch'ang p'o tu*. It is believed that this custom had its origin in the aboriginal tribes, who have an image of this kind.

SEVENTH MOON FEAST (中元), *chung yuan*.

T'u ti (土地) *hui*, the birthday of the precinct god is celebrated on the 7th of the 7th moon. On that day new paper clothing is put on him and incense and candles are burnt at his shrine. The meats offered are afterwards eaten by the family. At all the temples there is careful observance of this day.

The *Yü lan* (孟蘭) *hui*, is a Buddhist festival observed on the 14th of this moon for the transmigration of orphan spirits. It is believed that the doors of Hades are opened and the imprisoned spirits set at large from the 10th to the 15th. Those who have no home to go to roam about the streets and country. Many people will not go out at night during these five days.

To give forth rules of behaviour to the freed demons, *fang chieh* (放戒), or *li yü k'ung chieh* (利幽公戒), the priests erect a stage with many lighted lanterns. Some chanting takes place at which the spirits are admonished to

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keep the laws, and the priest afterwards scatters *kuei tan tzu*, 796 which consists of bread and cakes. These the people scramble for and eat. After the 15th the spirits again return to their own place.

A sacrifice is made to the orphan spirits by the heads of guilds and societies. Sometimes over 100 taels is spent, and if the guild is rich even 1,000 taels may be lavished on these orphan spirits.

Wine, meat, and even whole tables of feasts are offered to the ancestors, who are said to return to the home at this season. This is one of the most binding of all the idolatrous festivals of the year.

The likenesses of departed ancestors are hung in the chief room of the house. Some keep paintings, others have busts. Some keep them always hanging, others only display them at this season.

All the necessities of the spirit world are burned in paper in huge piles in front of the doors about the 13th of the month. This is a very important affair in the eyes of the people. On the 15th cash paper is burned.

MIDAUTUMN FESTIVAL (中秋節), *chung ch'iu chieh*,
The Eighth Moon Feast

This is the third time for collecting debts, equally important with the 5th moon, but of course less so than the time before the New Year.

Yüeh kuang hui is the moon festival. On the evening of the 15th the moon is worshipped. At this particular season the moon is said to give forth different kinds of light and some declare that the heavenly beings can be seen in the moon. It is also said that Wu Kang (吳剛) can be clearly seen at this time hacking away at the *Olea fragrans*, but the tree still stands. A lunar eclipse at this season is very unlucky.

Little round cakes are made called moon cakes, the centre of which is black, being made of lentils, boiled soft and then baked. Some cakes are white in the centre, being made

796 with flour and sugar, some are red, made from flour and rose-water. At this time walnuts, pears, and pomegranates are presented, all being round like the moon, and it is hoped by offering these that the family affairs will be prosperous "all round."

Sha chia t'a tsū, "to kill the Manchu of the family," is an expression which, some say, refers to the Tartars of the Yüan dynasty, others say it refers to the Ch'ing dynasty. It is commonly believed that a Manchu was billeted in each home. A plot was made to kill them on the 15th of this moon, the secret sign being a ticket giving the date to be put inside the moon cakes. The plot was carried out, and the family Manchu became the *t'u ti* of the family. In this eighth moon the anniversary of his death is observed. The black hearts of the moon cakes are said to represent the hearts of the Tartars.

On the evening of the 15th children put a lighted stick of incense on to the end of a bamboo pole and lift it high in the air. This is called *shua hsing hsü* to play at stars. Similarly branches of the pumelo-tree are taken and sticks of lighted incense fixed to the twigs and held high in the air. This practice is now gradually falling into disuse.

This is the time when teachers' salaries are due and children take presents to them. The teacher gives the children pencils. The head of the beggars, the keeper of the city gate, and the night watchman all collect their dues from the shopkeepers and private residences. The fifth and eighth moon feasts and the New Year are the great feasts of the Chinese people.

THE NINTH MOON FEAST (重陽節), *Ch'ung yang chieh*

The ninth of the ninth moon is called *Ch'ung yang* or a double nine. Rice for distilling is mixed with chrysanthemums; the wine thus made has a good flavour, but any wine is supposed to be better when distilled on that date.

Bags filled with dogwood seeds are carried to protect from sickness and give long life. Scholars carry their food to

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some high place, where they make poetry and afterwards feast and drink wine. 796 ●

The birthday of Hsü Ching yang (許旌陽) of Kiangsi is kept; he was an official in Ssüch'uan and is now deified and worshipped in the Kiangsi guilds. Legend has it that he had a bamboo stick on which he rode each evening to his native province to visit his mother; she, disturbed by the frequency and suddenness of his visits, broke his magic stick, and it took him a full month to get back. Meanwhile his public business was in sad arrears and the country in disorder. So he got the precinct god of his yamen to help him.

The birthday of Chiu Huang is celebrated; he is one of the nine stars of the Northern Bushel. These first nine days of this moon are spoken of as the Chiu Huang (九皇). If it should rain on the first of the ninth moon, it is likely to rain the whole nine days. During these nine days most people eat pulse or herbs, and at eating-houses flags are exposed with *chiu huang su shih* (素食) written on them, "vegetarian food for the feast." At this time no animals are killed and yellow flags are hung up everywhere, much chanting is done, such classics being used as the *pei tou ching* or the *chiu huang ching*. The delusion is that those who abstain from eating meat on these days have as much merit as those who are vegetarian for life.

If the family has moved or repaired the house during the year a ceremony of *kung t'ien an shên*, "worship heaven and pacify the family altar," is believed to be necessary for the peace of the living and is called *Hsiang shih* (祥事), while *Tao ch'ang* (道場) is for the dead.

To *chieh shou* is to add life and length of days to another person. This has its origin in the time of the Three Kingdoms when a certain Chao Yüan worshipped the Northern Bushel and said that he was willing that years should be taken from his own life and added to his parents'. Now there is the custom at this season of worshipping the Northern Bushel in order to obtain long life. The constellation is believed to be the chariot of the Pearly Emperor and is situated in the centre of the sky and revolves once a year, the four

• 796 seasons being subject to its influence, hence the ancient custom of meeting spring at the East, summer at the South, autumn at the West, and winter at the North.

On the evening of the ninth all trace of the feast is removed and burned at the door of the house, and soon the shambles are well stocked with pork and other flesh.

TENTH MOON FEAST (下元節), *hsia yüan chieh*

Shang yüan is the feast on the 15th of the 1st moon while *hsia yüan* is the feast on the 15th of the 10th moon. This probably has its origin in the time when the Chinese New Year was held about mid-winter.

On the 1st of this 10th moon is the festival of the Ox King, *niu wang hui*, the birthday of the king of oxen. This festival is reckoned very important in the country districts as the ox is said to be the foundation of all farming operations, and is therefore worshipped by many. In many of the temples and shrines chanting is carried on, theatricals and feasts are held in honour of the occasion. There is also a *ch'ang nien hui*, farm servants' fair. On this day theatricals are given; these gather people together at various temples, when some hiring is arranged between masters and servants.

The city god goes to the necropolis, where piles of paper money, houses, and clothing are burned as a provision for the orphan spirits during the cold weather.

On the first of the 10th moon, the city god's wife, accompanied by the city god, is carried out into the country to certain places which are said to be her maiden home, to pay her yearly visit to her parents. This is one of the most absurd of idolatrous practices.

753 and bites people. At this period the strength is great and
 755 no one can bind him. I have heard of them putting
 medicine down the throat of a rabid person by means of a
 bamboo tube and his getting well again.

To curse the mad dog is a special line of sorcery and
 when a person has been bitten he may use this method.

If a person has been bitten it is said to be very unlucky
 for anyone who speaks of it to him. During the 120 days
 onions, kidney beans, bean curd, chicken, eggs, fish and flour
 are avoided. The clanging of gongs or drums makes the
 patient worse.

This kind of trouble is looked upon by the Chinese as a
 retribution for the wickedness of three past generations and
 is classed with being killed by lightning or consumed by fire,
 bitten by a snake or devoured by a tiger.

ECLIPSES AND COMETS (日月食及彗星),
jih yüeh shih, sao hsing

821 The heavenly dog is said to be a star known as *t'ien kou*
 777 *hsing*; it eats the moon, causing eclipse.

Lo hou hsing (羅喉星) is a very unlucky star, which it
 is believed tries to devour the sun at eclipse times. The evil
 spirit from this star is said to have retarded the birth of
 Sakyamuni for six years.

In an eclipse of the sun or moon, it is believed that the
 Emperor or Empress, respectively, has lost virtue.

During an eclipse of the sun, a tub of water is placed in
 the full glare of the sun and the progress of the eclipse is
 watched in the water.

805 The official calendar carefully gives the dates of all
 796 eclipses and particulars as to when they begin and finish.
 Previous to the eclipse a proclamation is issued calling upon
 the people to save the sun or moon. The official sets up an
 altar, and candles and incense are burned thereon while he
 prostrates himself and begs the restoration of the luminary to
 its normal size; the *chiao kuan* or head of the religious sects
 goes round the altar beating a gong till the eclipse is over.
 In each house an instrument for making a noise is used to

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frighten away the evil dog. All the temple drums and gongs are lustily beaten till the eclipse is ended. 805
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The year that the Emperor Kuang Hsü died, the people declared that the sun had become red like blood, which indicated that the dynasty had come to an end, or that some great change was about to take place. 821
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A comet is a very unlucky omen; and the appearance of Halley's comet in 1910-11 brought with it a great deal of unrest and fear. The people believe that it indicates calamity such as war, fire, pestilence, and a change of dynasty. In some places on certain days the doors were unopened for half a day, no water was carried and many did not even drink water as it was rumoured that pestilential vapour was being poured down upon the earth from the comet.

Along with eclipses and comets comes a third herald of change, namely, the bird called the white-tailed swallow. It is said that when the Manchus took China this bird came and killed the canaries and took possession of their cages. In 1911 it is reported to have made its appearance in Ssüch'uan, and when possible it was caught, beheaded, dismembered and thrown to the four winds, as it indicated another foreign invasion of the country. 825

SNAKES AND DRAGONS (蛇龍), *shê lung*

The snake is an object both of loathing and reverence among the Chinese. In Ssüch'uan there are many kinds, of different colours and sizes. It is said that the small are snakes (蛇), the medium serpents (蟒), and the large are dragons (龍). A few of the different kinds of snakes as known by the Chinese are herewith given:— 137
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Sang kên tsü (桑根紫), or *ch'êng kan shê*, the steelyard snake, is red with spots and is very deadly.

Ts'ai hua, the rape-flower snake, a yellowish coloured snake from four to eight feet long and very poisonous.

Ch'ing chu piao, the green snake, just the colour of a green bamboo stem. It is from four to eight feet long and less poisonous than the former ones.

Even before the beginning of the present war, West Town had always had its share of outside influence through sons of the local families who went away to study in Peiping, Shanghai, Hongkong, Indo-China and even Japan and the United States. But in the hands of the locals these returned young persons were helpless in innovation. The tale is still vivid of a young returner from Hongkong having had a bucket of human stools poured over his head and that of his newly-wed while walking on the street hand in hand. In the custom of the locality such liberty was not allowed and the young couple had no redress of the rough treatment. Four years of war have made West Town somewhat different in appearance. There is a missionary college from Central China, which has taken refuge in a Confucian Temple and a Buddhist Temple just outside the center of the town. The students are mainly from provinces other than Yunnan, and the faculty and staff members consist of English and American missionaries besides Chinese. With these outsiders come freer relations between the sexes, preachings of their church, their wireless news, their medical care, their manner of dress, etc. Besides the church in this missionary college there are two other churches. One of the latter is supported by the American Episcopal Mission and the other by the theological seminary which is a guest institution to the college. A third group of people who call themselves "The Little Flock" also has considerable activity. This group sends out preachers to fraternize with the local people.

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The Normal Habits of the People

The Yearly Cycle of Observances and Festivals - Spirits and gods are the main source of protection from any trouble for practically all of the people. Therefore, the yearly cycle of life is largely a yearly cycle, according to the lunarr calendar, of offerings to the spirits of gods. The following table shows the major ritual observances during the year:

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<u>Lunar Month</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of the Occasion</u>
1st	1st	Spring Festival. Incense burned and food offered to the Gods of Wealth and the Goddess of Kuan Yin
"	9th	Birthday of Yu Hwang
"	15th	" " T'ien Kuan
2nd	3rd	" " Wen Ch'ang
"	8th	Ritual parade of Buddha through the town
"	15th	Birthday of Lao Chun
"	19th	" " Kuan Yin
3rd	3rd	" " Hsuan Ti
"	Ch'ing Ming	Visiting ancestral graveyards
"	15th	Birthday of the God of Wealth
"	16th	" " " Mountains
"	20th	" " " Goddess of Niang Niang
"	28th	" " Gung Yuch
4th	8th	" " Tai Tso
"	15th	" " God of Fire
"	20th	" " Yuan Shih
5th	5th	Tuan Wu Festival
6th	6th	Birthday of the Southern Dipper (Nan Tou)
"	24th	" " Military Sages
7th	7th	" " K'uei Hsing
"	14th	Ancestor Worship
"	15th	Birthday of the God of Earth

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<u> lunar Month</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Name of the Occasion</u>
7th	19th	Birthday of the God of Pao Miao
8th	1st	" " Chin Chia
"	3rd	" " The Kitchen God
"	15th	The Moon Festival (Mid-Autumn Festival)
"	27th	Birthday of Confucius
9th	9th	" " Tou An
10th	15th	" " the God of Water
10th	(Some time)	Visiting ancestral graveyards
11th	19th	Birthday of Sun God
12th	8th	" " Pa Ch'a
"	23rd	The God of Kitchen reports to Heaven
"	30th	New Year Eve. Offerings to various gods.

Each of the above is an occasion of more or less festivity in the form of offerings and feasting among those gathered in a small area of the town or from the entire village. These gatherings may either be purely male or female. In addition there are other occasions of more or less ritual significance. Scattered over the entire area are many temples of local patron gods (Pen Chu). Each of these gods governs the welfare of an area or of a village, has a surname, name, and birthday, such as the third of the first moon, the 14th and 19th of the 4th Moon, etc. Each of these birthdays is an occasion of offerings, celebration and feasting at the temple for people of the area in which the particular patron god governs. On the first and fifteenth days of every month incense and food will be offered to these gods too. Then, three days after the birth of a child incense and food will be offered to these gods. On any day when a family is slaughtering a pig, incense will also be burned on family portals. Often a family calls in a priest to pray and read the scriptures for a day. This is called a Prayer for Blessing (peacefulness) and is performed on a small altar just outside of the family wall, in the street.

There are other occasions of emergency, as when a member of a family is seriously ill. On such occasions ritual offerings are usually made to one or other of the gods following advice given by a witch woman or a fortune teller. Finally, death of a family member brings with it, of course, many occasions of ritual significance. (4)

Living Habits as regards Cleanliness. - There is no idea of personal hygiene or of public health as the West understands these terms. Personal habits of the people are like those in most other villages in China: drinking of unboiled water, eating exposed and uncooked food and raw vegetables, considering flies on food as a matter of course, (5) and taking no bath. Passing through West Town and its villages are many brooks formed by water running down from the gorges of Ts'an Shan. Usually on one or both sides of every street there are such streams. Each stream thus passes through many villages before finally reaching the lake. Such streams are the main places for washing not only rice and vegetables, meat and fish before cooking but also of clothes and night soil containers. Once the wife of a friend of the author

(4) The author does not think that the above list exhausts the total number of ritual occasions for inhabitants of this community. Walking through the streets during any evening the author would see at least several clusters of burning incense and ashes of burned paper money for spirits. The ones given are however the major occasions.

(5) Flies on food are called "food flies" without which a meal is regarded as improper.

CHAPTER III

THE COMMUNITY IN DISTRESS

164 The cholera epidemic came to West Town as to other localities in the area from Hsia Kuan on the Burma Road, and spread with the stream of refugees that steadily flowed into the town and villages.⁽⁶⁾ It affected a wide area. In West Town it began at about the beginning of the Fourth Moon (about the tenth of May, 1942) and ended at about the end of the same month (about the tenth of June, 1942). Only a few deaths occurred at first; then heavier tolls were taken of the population. For a period of time even in the town itself there were six or seven deaths a day. The price of coffins rose from five hundred dollars to two or three thousand dollars each, and later coffins were practically unobtainable. Carpenters worked day and night. Funeral processions of various kinds became a common every-day sight. At night the streets, unlike before the onset of the epidemic, were practically empty. Darkness and silence ruled everywhere except in carpenters' shops where much activity was in evidence.

A. Cholera Prayer Meetings

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796 The authority of the missionary college urged its students and faculty members to be injected immediately when two cases of cholera appeared in the local hospital.¹ But the general populace took little notice of it until about the seventh of the month. Prayer meetings then took place one after another. Such meetings took place not only in the center of the town but also in all the surrounding villages. Within the confines of the town at least several areas had such prayer meetings, in two places twice. Some of these are big events, employing at least three Taoist priests and three or four musicians in addition to a larger number of volunteer ushers and officers from the area. Others are smaller events with only one priest and no musician, in addition to a small number of ushers and officers. In each case there is a big or small altar covered with canvas, on which are displayed tablets or pictures of the various gods, the priests paraphernalia and quantities of offering to the gods. In the case of the one-priest affair the meeting usually lasted for one or two days. The larger affairs lasted three days and four nights each. The author had opportunity to watch such prayer meetings in several surrounding villages in addition to the those in the town itself. The following list gives the area and villages according to the order of the appearance of the prayer meetings: (See Diagram, Names of areas being represented by alphabet letters, arabic numbers indicate order of appearance of the prayer meetings).²

Area or Village by Order of the Appearance of the Meeting.	Date (Lunar Calendar)	Number of Priests Engaged
1. A	7, 8, 9, 4th Moon	1 priest
2. B	About 9, 4th Moon	1 "
3. C	" 9, " "	1 "
4. D	8, 9, 10, " "	3 "
5. E	9, 10, " "	1 "
6. F	10, 11, 12, " "	3 "
7. G	10, 11, " "	1 "
7. H	12, 13, " "	1 "

(6) When Burma fell.

¹[ON the first of the month--Analyst]

²[See p. 10--Analyst]

Area or Village by
Order of the Appearance
of the MeetingsDate (Year)
CalendarNumber of
Priests Present
3 Priests
(T'ien Ching only)751
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8. I	15, 16, 17, 4th Month	
9. J	16, 17, 18 " "	
9. K	16, 17, 18, 19, 4th Moon	3 (with Wen God ceremony)
10. L	21, 22, " "	1
11. M	About 20, " "	3
12. N	22, 23, 24, " "	3
12. O	22, 23, " "	1
13. H	23, 24, 25, " "	5 (with Wen God ceremony)
14. P	About 25, " "	1
15. Q (Prayer and the ceremony of receiving a special goddess)	25, 26, 27, " "	3
16. X	1, 2, 3 5th Moon	5

(Altogether nineteen meetings are here recorded. See Diagram for the approximate location of each area.)

A complete description of the rites involved in these prayer meetings is impossible in the present paper. The author proposes here to state in outline form only (1) the main points of the rites, (2) the cost of the meetings, and (3) the meaning of the prayers.

1. The Main Points of the Rites

The most important thing is the work of the priests in reading their scriptures, reciting incantations, and burning petitions to the gods. In the smaller one-priest affairs the reading and reciting is done by the priest alone, with the accompaniment of the sound of a "wood fish" or a bell. In the larger three-priest affairs this is done in singing and reciting. The singing is accompanied by cymbals, bugles, and stringed instruments played by three or four accompanists who often join in the priests' chorus. This is done by three or four priests taking turns or together, from about 7:00 in the morning to about 11:00 or 12:00 in the evening, stopping for meals or for a pipe. Petition papers are burned to the various gods at one time or another. The burning of such papers involves many strenuous duck steps made in succession by three priests so that their faces are covered with perspiration. Both the scriptures and the petitions state that the people of the locality have deep sins and know that the gods are now showing their anger, but respectfully and tremblingly request the gods to withdraw the punishment, and that the people promise to obey the superior spirits forever. On the second evening of the prayer meeting the chief priest assumes the dress of a chief monk and sits on a lotus flower-shaped seat fixed on a high platform; while many boys and men hold their immediate ancestors' (usually father or mother) paper tablets and gradually push the latter over a cloth "bridge" towards the chief priest, as the latter performs various rituals. This is the ritual of "sitting the lotus" and is for giving blessing to the souls who have died of sudden illness or accidents (as a matter of fact, mostly deaths due to the epidemic). The third night is signified by a ritual spreading of porridge and paper money to homeless (i.e., descendant-less) spirits who may be about the place, along the

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streets leading away from the center of the town to the outer highway. The fourth night is chiefly occupied by rituals concerned with the Wen God (or the God of Epidemics). This god can release and arrest all evil spirits causing any form of epidemics. On this night his image (made of paper on a bamboo frame, about 15 feet high) is carried about in a torch procession formed by the chief priest and music players through the various streets of the town and its surrounding villages. In this way the god will have collected all those evil spirits and at about 1:00 a.m. the image of the god and a dragon boat (also made of paper and bamboo framework) full of paper ingots, rice, and other things are ritually taken out to the main highway about three li west of the town and burned. The Wen or epidemic is then regarded as having been sent away. (Only two prayer meetings include this Wen God ceremony.)

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The number of persons engaged in each of these affairs is impressive. In most cases the officers of a meeting are listed on a yellow sheet of paper and posted in advance on a wall near the meeting. The smallest number that came to the author's notice was about 12 and the largest number, as in a meeting which took place at Area I on the Diagram, was 77. A moderate list is as the following:

General Direction	10	Looking after offering	1
Management	8	Treasury	1
Receiving guests	1		
Looking after the food	1 or 2		
Worshipping on the altar	2	Inviting Guests	1
Arranging furniture	2	Cooking rice	3
In charge of incense and candles	1	Boiling tea	1
Looking after vinegar and charcoal	1	Serving feast dishes	4-6
		Serving tea	2-3
		Sprinkling porridge	2

The directors are elders or powerful personalities in the local area who do not actually have a close connection with the work of the meetings. The meetings are run by the managers, who are usually younger than the directors. It is difficult to form a clear picture as to who in fact sponsor these prayer meetings. In the Area I, e.g., some of the managers and elders got together and decided on the prayer meeting after a moment's discussion. In the Area II, one elder, who was later in the list of managers, was the moving spirit; discussion of some of the major points concerning the prayer meeting (such as the site) was first announced by him in a little yellow notice posted on the wall near the center of the street; and the others replied by calling upon him.

A scrutiny of some of the lists of officers in the various meetings reveals that generally speaking the managing, directing and worshipping duties are in the hands of older persons, while the works (cooking, serving food, offering, etc.) are on the shoulders of the younger people, professional or otherwise. The duty of serving tea is always done by boys. But it will be wrong to say that the older people start these prayer meetings. The latter are in the tradition no less than the customary organization in agriculture. Different members of a family may have different duties in, as well as ideas regarding, the sowing and planting of rice, but none of them will have any doubt as to the time, necessity and usual manner of the sowing and planting. So it is with these prayer meetings. Such meetings are such a deep-rooted institution that adult members of the community are familiar with their out-

751 line to an amazing extent. The author had spoken to many local persons about
796 these prayer meetings, in the beginning of the epidemic as well as after it
was over. Not a single adult had any difficulty at all in grasping what was
being asked about after the simplest possible reference was made.

In the above list two kinds of officers need a special word. First, the two officers who are in charge of Worshipping on the Altar. These are volunteers who take turns to kneel in front of the gods on the altar during the entire period of the priests' ritual activities. The man on such a duty holds with both of his hands in front of him a special incense bowl containing burning incense powder. In most meetings the duty falls on elderly people who are in the locality all the time. In the Area I, one of these officers was a clerk from the branch office of a governmentally owned savings bank in Paoshan, about 200 kilometers southwest of West Town on the Burma Road. He does not stay home normally. The idea is that he who is on this duty represents the community to show the gods the people's earnestness and sincerity in their appeal.

Secondly, from the latter part of the list it will be clear that there is some feasting. In regular prayer meetings of the community (for example on one of the birthdays of gods) the feasting is usually participated in by all members of the community who have joined the meeting. But in the cholera prayer meetings there is much less feasting. The priests and the music players have to be lavishly fed. So must be most of the volunteer officers. To visitors from this or other areas is served hot tea. Some of the volunteer tea-servers are pupils of the local middle school whose homes are located in the area in which the particular meeting had taken place.

On the walls near all such meetings, and in some cases on the walls of the entire area, are square posters of yellow paper with eight characters in red: "Pray and abstain from evils with all sincerity, clean up and avoid dirt absolutely." At the entrance to the larger prayer meetings, or at the ends of the street leading to them, are large complets showing that good deeds and earnestness are essential for mobilizing the gods, or that the prayer meetings are a collective effort to propitiate the gods who may decide to forgive sins previously committed by the community.

2. Cost of the Prayer Meetings

556 In all the prayer meetings expenses are met by voluntary contributions.
796 The managers send out emissaries to solicit contributions, but a large proportion of the contributors send their contributions in money or in kind before being asked at all. Generally within a local area everybody knows what everybody else is worth, and the contributions are as a general rule proportionate to one's ability to contribute. Sometimes social position in the locality determines the amount one contributes. When the meeting is over the income, with a detailed list of the names of contributors and amounts they have contributed, and expenditures are posted in a public place. Usually the list puts the larger contributor's names first, but again social position of the contributor may be the first consideration. A person's name may appear in the lists of contributors of several prayer meetings just as it may appear in the lists of officers of several prayer meetings. This is either because the person owns shops or houses in the several areas or because his social prestige is important to the success of the meetings in question. In some cases the sum of contribution does not seem to be related at all to the contributor's social position

or to his wealth as compared with others in the same area. Thus two coffin-shop owners in one area (Area E) contributed between them a sum of two thousand and five hundred dollars and are the biggest contributors of the area. The reason is that they have suddenly made a lot of money through the epidemic. In order to make other people feel better and their newly acquired wealth more secure, they deem it best to give generously first to the popular cause. 556 796

There are others who refuse to contribute. These do not openly say that they disbelieve the cause but simply play a game of delayed action until the solicitors are tired of them. In none of the local areas is the proportion of such individuals large, and as far as the author is aware in only three areas are they found at all.

Then as to the actual cost of these meetings. The one meeting which cost the biggest sum took place at the center of the town (Area E). The sum is, in round numbers, fourteen thousand and nine hundred national dollars. The one which cost the least took place in Area B. The sum is about one hundred national dollars. The total publicly announced expenditure for nineteen meetings amounts to about \$43,175. NC. 796

In order to realize the significance or insignificance of this figure it will be necessary to compare it with other figures on financial matters in the community. The average monthly expenditure of a family of three to eleven individuals was, according to a graduate from the refugee missionary college, about one hundred and twenty-five national dollars in the first half of 1940. Using this as a basis, when the rise of prices is taken into consideration, the corresponding amount in the first half of 1942 (when the cholera prayer meetings took place) should be from \$548. to \$1,096. (both in national currency). It is thus clear that the amount expended on cholera prayers in 1942 would represent the average monthly expenditure of from 39 to 79 families of the locality. It is to be pointed out that, although the locality contains some outstandingly wealthy families which could afford to expend thirty thousand or a million dollars for a funeral the largest individual donation in these prayer meetings that came to the author's notice is two thousand and four hundred dollars. This means that the major part of the funds comes not from a few families but from many families.

On the other side of the picture we may mention that at no time had West Town's populace contributed more than one-fifth of the amount expended

- (7) According to An Tse-ming: General Conditions of Economic Conditions in West Town (B.A. thesis, 1940), p. 120, 140 and 141. The number of sample families taken is small, so that the average on the expenditure is bound to be questionable. The figure \$250.00 monthly is an impression rather than hard statistical fact. Taking 1936 price as 100, the price for the first half of 1940 was 1,848.38 (p. 141, *ibid.*), and for the first half of 1942, 8,060 to 16,120. Therefore the average monthly expenditure for the families for the first half of 1942 should be as stated in the text. (The sums are obtained by the following formula: (1) $250:1,848 = X:8,060$, or (2) $250:1,848 = X:16,120$). One of the author's students in the same college (Mr. Hu Ju-huai) had made a study of all butchers' families in West Town (May, 1942) and has found that most butchers smoke opium and their average family expenditure about doubles the results of the above calculation. However, this last mentioned study is based upon a special trade. The cost of opium may also have largely been responsible for the much larger average monthly expenditure. No definite conclusion can be drawn from it.

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on these cholera prayer meetings to the cause of the War against the national enemy. The wealthiest family of the locality, after spending more than one million dollars on a funeral in West Town, gave fifty thousand dollars from their condolers' presents to the national cause and earned for themselves much publicity in the papers.

An analysis of the items of the expenditures shows that from about one-ninth to one-fourth of the total is paid to the priests and their musical and other assistants; from about one-half to two-thirds is expended on food for human beings as well as for the gods and spirits; and the rest is expended on paper money, incense, candles, fire crackers, paper works (image and dragon boats, etc.) and miscellaneous expenses.

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The ordinary priest's wage for a working day is as follows:

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Wage - \$55.00; Tobacco - \$5.00; rice (one sheng) - worth about \$18.00; total - \$78.00 WC.

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For the chief priest in a prayer meeting the working day wage may be considerably more. In addition to the above he gets a larger share of the rice offered by those who want their newly deceased family members "uplifted" in the spirit world on the second night of the prayer meeting. In the larger meetings such a source of income is considerable. In the prayer meeting which took place in Area X, the author counted nineteen tables ritually "uplifted" on the second night, which meant that the priests would receive nineteen sheng of rice (or about three hundred and eighty dollars) for the meeting alone.

The priest's wage is very impressive when we compare it with the expenditures of the sample families mentioned above and with the wages of other workers in the community. The author only studied the work of the priests in the community to a very limited extent, so cannot say how many days the average priest works during a month. But when we consider the number of ritual occasions stated in Chapter II of this paper, the total number of the population, and the fact that there are not more than a hundred priests in the community⁽⁸⁾ (the community refers to the town and its surrounding villages), we shall have a fair idea on the working opportunities of each priest. Now then, if we assume that each priest works for ten days a month, then his monthly income will at least amount to somewhere around five thousand national dollars.⁽⁹⁾ The daily wage of a laborer on a farm around West Town, on the other hand, during rice-planting which occurred in the same month as the prayer meetings, was seven dollars to seven dollars and fifty cents a day plus board. That means that the laborer gets about 240 dollars plus food a month during the "busy period" on farms while the priest gets about twenty times that sum or more plus ten days of food a month. Food for a month per person, according to the best standards in West Town, was not more than three or four hundred national dollars during the corresponding period. The distance between the income of the priest and

(8) This figure may not be exact. It was obtained from the estimates of a few informants. The author's attempts at studying the census records of the sub-district government (which are not exact by any means) met with some unsurmounted obstacles at the time.

(9) For ordinary prayers of blessing and in funerals the wage may be less than that in these cholera prayer meetings.

that of the laborers and those simple families studied is large. His monthly income is even more than double the comparatively high income of the hutchers. Probably this fact is responsible for making a larger percentage of them opium addicts than they would have been had their economic position been less favorable. The priests of West Town are undoubtedly a privileged class of people.

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3. The Meaning of the Prayer Meetings

(a) The Priest's Explanations. - The author has spoken to three officiating priests of these prayer meetings, one of them the most famous priest in the locality, about the meaning of these prayers. Their explanation is the following: The epidemic is caused by evil Wen spirits, spread forth by the Wen God to punish the people for their sinful deeds. The Wen God acts by order of the superior deities. In order to avert the disaster it is necessary to invoke the mercy of superior deities who will require the Wen God to retract the Wen spirits which he let loose earlier on. It is necessary to invoke as many superior deities as possible. The chief deities, worshipped in the center of the main altars, are the San Ch'ing, who are three deities in one, or Leo Tzu, the founder of Taoist religion. (10) More deities are invoked each day of the prayer meeting, so that a one-day prayer meeting can invoke only a much smaller number of deities than a two-day prayer meeting. The latter again is less effective than a three-day prayer meeting. Usually three days and four nights are an adequate duration, but for real perfection seven or eight more days will be desirable.

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In order to move the deities it is necessary to show first of all that the people of the locality are moral and then that their hearts are absolutely earnest and that their request is extremely pressing. For this reason posters exhorting the people to take care of their moral qualities rather than anything else are essential. For the same reason in each prayer meeting one or more representatives must be chosen to perform a continuous worshipping duty (namely to kneel on the altar with an incense burner in hand during the entire length of the prayer meeting). For the same reason, too, it is necessary for each street as well as each village to have a separate prayer meeting. The petition papers burnt during the prayers are like petitions to our worldly officials. The various amulets and incantations used and performed respectively are special keys which the mortal does not comprehend but to which the deities will readily respond. The loud music by bugles, drum, cymbals, flute, bells, etc., as well as the singing and reading by the priests, are for the deities to hear. The louder the music and voice, the higher will they reach and consequently the easier and more quickly will the deities notice the distress of the area and the more swift take actions for its relief.

Only a properly "qualified" priest can perform the duty of the prayer, and certain special inborn priests enjoy more such power than others who are less fortunate.

It is not necessary for every prayer meeting to include the "Wen-God-retracting-evil-Wen-spirits" ritual; one or two will be enough to fulfil the purpose. But more ritual actions are always a safer course to take than less ritual actions. The ritual of spreading rice porridge along the streets

(10) It will be interesting to note that this "three deities in one" tale is entirely based upon a traditional novel on deities called Fung Shen Pang (literally, List of Ordained Gods).

¹[of choleva, in "West Town" -- Analyst]

796 leading to the main road away from the town or village is a measure to make
 753 sure that all descendant-less spirits and those spirits who are the results
 of undue or accidental deaths will be sent away so that they will not be able
 to create trouble or wreck vengeance on innocent souls by means of the epidemic.

796 (b) The Worshipers' Explanations. - These explanations are neither
 753 as precise nor as uniform as that of the priests. The word "worshipper" needs
 124 a word of definition. The author cannot decide whose belief is genuine or
 firmer and whose is false or less firm. He can only use the criterion of
 external behavior. In this way he regards as worshippers not only those who
 subscribe financially or by work to these prayer meetings but also those who
 do not belong to the few agencies of outside influence such as the college,
 the middle school and the hospital, and who do not exclusively resort to modern
 measures of sanitation and injection but passively take the prayer meetings
 as a matter of course.

In all, through personal inquiries, the investigator has collected about sixty statements. From a review of these statements he has been able to distinguish the following categories:

1. One type of statements gives the questioner the impression: "Why ask? Isn't it natural enough?" To this category belongs the answer given by the watcher of a public granary in the Temple of God of Literature in Area F. He said: "When there is general illness, there is prayer meeting." No amount of explanatory effort on the part of the investigator could make him give a different answer. He knows nothing about the prayers uttered by the priests. He is about 45 years of age and has a wife and children. He and his family have not had any injection. Another man, one of about fifty, a dye-shop keeper, is almost blind of trachoma. He was the sole person on worshipping duty in Area E prayer meeting. That means that the man knelt on the altar for three days and four evenings till 12:00 P.M. or later except for brief intermissions. The author had hoped that this man would have much to say about the prayer meeting but was disappointed to receive the following answer: "That (prayer meeting) is because there is Wen Sickness." He would not mention anything about ghosts or spirits at all. When the author pursued his query further, the man simply pulled up his trousers and showed the author his badly wounded knees, while remarking: "You see, both knees are sore from kneeling." The majority of this class of statements refer to the meetings by saying, "This is doing a good deed."

2. A second type of statements is more philosophical. It may be represented by the statement of a cloth and gold dealer of about 38 years of age, who used to travel among several western Yunnan and Burma cities like T'ong Yueh, Myncyina, and Paoshan, and had returned to West Town just two months before the onset of the epidemic. He contributed the sum of fifteen dollars to the cholera prayer in his street. He said, "The prayer is good for appeasing the spirits so that the Wen will not continue. I give some money because I want to do my part, not for anything else." When the query was pursued further, the man turned to psychological terms: "You outsiders need not fear the epidemic or other catastrophe in a strange locality at all. When I went out into strange places I know nothing about their gods; I did not fear." "When you walk over a tomb and do not realize that it is a tomb, you are not afraid."

Regarding the doings of the priests in these prayer meetings he said, "Although I know how to read and write a little, I don't know what is

written in their (the priests') books. No scholars do - their Chiao (or creed) is a different one. ... We only pay them, and what they sing or pray are not matters for us to dictate. We just let them do what they deem necessary."

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This man's attitude of indifference towards the priests' incantations and scripture-reading represents, in the author's opinion, that of a large number of the inhabitants toward these prayer meetings.

3. The third type of statements implies that who is or who is not struck by the epidemic is all a matter of fate (Chieh Shu), and that there is no really effective way of prevention or cure. It may best be illustrated by a man's statement concerning the medical powder which a Feng's Dispensary gave free of charge to all applicants. This powder is advertised by this dispensary throughout the town as very effective for curing cholera. One of the managers in the prayer meeting in Area E, a man of about forty-five, showed the author a packet of this powder which he carried in his pocket and asked the author to smell it. The stuff smelled like a combination of aromatic and incense. He and another older man agreed that the powder had been effective on some patients and entirely useless on others. Their explanation was that the question was one of fate and not of medicine or anything else. Yet somehow these two men seemed also to think that the medicines and the prayer meetings were not without their favorable effects. To prove the latter they pointed to the fact as evidence that by then (the beginning of the Fifth Moon) the force of the epidemic was gradually slackening.

4. The fourth class of statements gives one or more specific points of explanation. One man, about thirty years of age, a local shop assistant, said that the prayer meetings were for cleaning up the "wen atmosphere (or air). He did not mention spirits or ghosts until the author advanced to him the idea of "catching ghosts" in a doubtful manner. Then he said: "Yes, yes, they (the prayer meetings) are for uplifting and sending away (Ch'ao Fu) all those descendantless ghosts and spirits! There have indeed been too many deaths of late."

Another man, about twenty-five years of age, who is a laborer of some description said that "the prayer meetings are for providing something (like material comfort) for homeless spirits so that they will go away and not harm the living." (The idea is that each of these spirits, like those which are caused by undue deaths, will usually claim a substitute.)

5. The fifth and last class of statements is from individuals who are very much conscious of the outsider's difference in ideas and customs from their own and yet feel that they cannot raise themselves over and above the doings and affairs of their community. Thus a mason, about thirty-two years of age, named Yang, offered the author at first the idea that the prayer meetings were for uplifting and sending away ghosts and spirits which were descendantless, a statement practically the same as that given by the first man illustrating the fourth class of statements. But as the conversation developed the man suddenly smiled and said: "Of course all these are superstitions." (Mi Hsin, the modern Chinese translation of the term).

Some statements from the only remaining Chu Jen in "est Town, an aged man of about seventy and a highly honored soul among the populace, are even more striking. He first said that the prayer meetings were for the good of the community. Then he concluded, "Ah, 'wen sickness, prayers and

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reading of sacred scriptures can keep it away." "The prayer meetings can clean up the locality" (never mentioned a word about the ghosts or spirits). The author then intentionally echoed in a very affirmative tone: "Of course, the prayer meetings have cleared up the epidemic." Upon hearing this the old man instantly responded: "But all these are simply superstitions." (again Mr Hsin, the modern Chinese translation of the term). The author then explained to him, following Malinowski, that the true effect of these prayers might be to stabilize the community during a crisis, in which case they would have their proper function. He made no comment on the author's explanation. It might be that he failed to comprehend what was being said. It might also be that he understood it but did not know how to reply properly. But he simply went on to say that the meetings were "affairs" of the community, and as a personality of standing in the community he had to patronize them. He also mentioned that the community had this sort of prayer meetings on a large scale only once before, in the seventh year of the Republic (about twenty-three years ago) when another Wen broke out (not cholera, but headache and vomiting). This old man contributed twenty dollars to one prayer meeting and twenty-five dollars to another. (He is not at all wealthy.) He headed the list of directors in the prayer meeting which took place at Area H (center of the town) in which the highest single donation was \$2,400.

This class of persons generally express, in one way or another, that they feel happier if they participate in the "affairs" of the community in the proper manner, whatever the outsider thinks about these "affairs". To this class also evidently belong some outstanding citizens of wealth in this community. The L. family, e.g. which is the chief supporter of the hospital and the middle school and the sole owner of the public library, spent over a million dollars for a pompous funeral in the traditional style and was the largest single contributor in at least two prayer meetings (one of which took place at the center of West Town). The R., another wealthy family, is also very much in the same position. A most interesting fact was observed in connection with a certain U. family which used to be the sixth or seventh wealthy family of the locality but which has been going down hill for some time. In a conversation Mrs. U. told the author that her family contributed five hundred national dollars to the cost of the prayer meeting in her street (Area X). But on examination of the list of contributors the author found that her husband's name was only associated with the insignificant sum of one hundred national dollars among donors of much larger sums.

[556] Incidents such as the last reveal that support lent to the prayer meetings is primarily a matter of social prestige, and the individual or family that has not been able to keep up with the expected level feels very much embarrassed.

An analysis of the conditions of these informants gives no definite impression as regards the significance of their age. The author had at first expected to find older people more conservative about the prayer meetings, giving more details, and the younger ones less so. This expectation is not met by the data. It is true that, as stated before, the elders and older people are in charge of the direction-managing and worshipping duties in practically all the prayer meetings. An inspection of some of the prayer meetings in session will also tell us that the spectators standing or sitting about the places of meeting during most hours of the day are either older people or children or older women. But such phenomenon is perhaps natural enough. The middle-aged or other able-bodied men and women have their work in shops, fields, and at home.

Probably the cases are not large enough in number to draw definite conclusions from them. One thing, however, seems fairly certain. This is that, generally speaking, the men who have had experience with the outside world either as travellers or traders, or having read very much about it, or having had intimate contact with the ways of the outsider, tend to be more philosophical and detached about the prayer meetings. Some of them think that all outsiders regard such prayer meetings as superstitions and, in a tone of embarrassment, would not hesitate to brand them as such to the outsider, but in their relations within the community they have to remain faithful to the indigenous ways.

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B. Other Measures to Combat the Epidemic

1. T'an Ching

The prayer meetings are not the only steps taken to ward off or conquer the epidemic. While the prayer meetings are being carried on here and there, other things happen as well. The first of these is T'an Ching, or ritual talk on the scriptures. The author is not clear as to the type of scriptures here referred to. On the platform where such exercises take place are the tablets or portraits of Confucius, Lao-tse and Buddha. The main event on this platform is the playing of music, both wind and string, by amateur volunteers. At intervals some read a kind of scripture which is usually Taoist and not Confucian. In one or two T'an Ching places the music consists of singing to the accompaniment of a three-stringed plucked instrument. They perform just like story singers.

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In Area J, T'an Ching took the place of a prayer meeting. In Area H and Area P, it took place at the same time as the prayer meetings. In Area H, the T'an Ching platform is just back of the prayer altar, and in Area P it is opposite the prayer altar.

The explanation given for such T'an Ching meetings seems to be of two kinds: one is that the gods and spirits should be pleased, and to soothe them by some light music (Ta Yush) is the best. The other explanation is more vague. Both T'an Ching and the prayer meetings are of the same effect - both for the good of the community. It is a gesture of man's repentance so that the gods will withdraw the "pen, or the epidemic, from the community. In more than half of the areas in which prayer meetings took place there were no T'an Ching meetings.

2. Volunteer Advertisements

Soon after the epidemic had started various hand-written or printed posters and advertisements began to appear in the streets. These are of two general categories - those giving actual medicine or methods of cure and those giving advice as regards the prevention of the disaster. The first kind is practically all medicinal and the second kind is mainly moral. Among the first category are either prescriptions for people to copy and then buy the medicine in any native dispensary, or notices of some ready-made mixture which will be given to applicants free of charge. The latter may be obtained from either a private home or a dispensary. The author has been able to collect different prescriptions and have them examined (1) from the point of view of modern medical knowledge with the aid of The Index of Chinese Drugs (11)

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(11) World Book Company, Shanghai, 1934.